

The Book of the Two Principles

Archive Notes

The Book of the Two Principles is the largest surviving work of Cathar literature. It provides an important witness to the sophistication of Cathar argumentation against orthodox theology -- a debate in which the Good Christians prevailed, at least in the contemporary judgment of a large portion of the population of Southern France during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It should be remembered that the Good Christians dominated the argument and won the heart of Languedoc; it was a genocidal and generation-long crusade against them by Pope and Kings that they lost.

The work is composed of seven sections, all probably written in the early thirteenth century by an Italian Cathar. The most likely author is identified as John of Lugio, a "True Christian" who lived in the vicinity of Lake Garda (between Brescia and Verona) around 1240. In the fourteenth century the manuscript fell into orthodox hands, and remained in Dominican monastic libraries until being transferred in modern times to the Biblioteca Nazionale in Florence. It was first published in 1939 -- after six hundred years of suppression.

Whoever the author, he was very well-read and a skillful debater. It is obvious he was thoroughly familiar with the Latin Vulgate Bible and with the arguments used by Catholic polemicists against the Cathars. In evidence of the erudition of its author, the treatise has been noted to include citations from Roman law, a pseudo-Aristotelian work, and phrases from the writings of Solomon ibn Gabirol, the eleventh century Andalusian Jewish philosopher. The author explains his purpose in his introduction:

Since many persons are hampered in rightly understand the truth, to enlighten them, to stimulate those who do have right understanding, and also for the delight of my soul, I have made it my purpose to explain our true faith by evidence from the Holy Scriptures and with eminently suitable arguments, invoking to my efforts the aid of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

This is a long text (about 35,000 words in translation); it is presented here as one single document. This version is closely based on the translation appearing in: Walter L. Wakefield and Austin P. Evans, *Heresies of the High Middle Ages* (2nd ed., New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. 511ff. The text presented below includes a few minor corrections and occasional minor changes in phrasing (and probably a few new typos). We recommend serious students consult the published edition, which has extensive notes that are not reflected in this online edition.

-- Lance S. Owens

The Book of the Two Principles

Part 1. On Free Will

[1] Here Begins the Book of the Two Principles. Since many persons are hampered in rightly understand the truth, to enlighten them, to stimulate those who do have right understanding, and also for the delight of my soul, I have made it my purpose to explain our true faith by evidence from the Holy Scriptures and with eminently suitable arguments, invoking to my efforts the aid of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

[2] On the Two Principles. To the honor of the Most Holy Father, I wish to begin my discussion concerning the two principles by refuting the belief in one Principle, however much this may contradict well-nigh all religious persons. We may commence as follows: Either there is only one First Principle, or there is more than one. If, indeed, there were one and not more, as the unenlightened say, then, of necessity, He would be either good or evil.. But surely not evil, since then only evil would proceed from Him and not good, as Christ says in the Gospel of the Blessed Matthew: "And the evil tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can an evil tree bring forth good fruit." And the Blessed James says in his Epistle: "Doth a fountain send forth out of the same hole sweet and bitter water? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear grapes; or the vine, figs? So neither can the salt water yield sweet."

[3] On the Goodness of God. Now, our opponents are clear in their assertion that God is good, holy, just, wise, and true; that He is also called pure goodness and is above all praise, as they seek to prove by the following citations and many others of like nature. For Jesus the son of Sirach says: "Glorify the Lord as much as ever you can, for He will yet far exceed, and His magnificence is wonderful. Blessing the Lord, exalt Him as much as you can, for He is above all praise." And David says "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and of His greatness there is no end"; and again, "Great is our Lord, and great is his power; and of His wisdom there is no number." And Paul says to the Romans: "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are His judgments and how unsearchable His ways, and so on. And in the Liber de causis is written, "The first cause is far greater than can be described."

[4] That God Knows All Things from Eternity. Whence they stoutly affirm that God knows all things from eternity because of the greatness of His wisdom; that all the past, the present, and the future are always before Him and He knows all things before they come to pass, as says Susanna in the Book of Daniel, "O eternal God, who knowest hidden things, who knowest all things before they come to pass." And Jesus, son of Sirach, says, "For all things were known to the Lord God before they were created; so also after they were perfected He beholdeth all things." And the Apostle writes to the Hebrews, "Neither is there any creature invisible in His sight, but all things are naked and open to His eyes."

[5] On the Goodness, Holiness, and Justice of God. It is clearly demonstrated, moreover, that our Lord God is good, holy, and just, as is said above. For David says: "How good is God to Israel, to them that are of a right heart"; and again, "The Lord is faithful in all His words and holy in all His works"; and again, "The Lord is sweet and righteousness; therefore He will give a law to sinners in the way"; and again, God is a just judge, strong and patient; is He angry every day?" And in the Book of Wisdom it is written, "For so much then as thou art just, Thou orderest all things justly."

[6] On the Omnipotence of God. For the Lord is called omnipotent, as our opponents avow, and He can do whatsoever pleases Him; nor can anyone resist Him," or say, "Why dost Thou so?" As Ecclesiastes says: For He will do all that pleaseth Him and His word is full of power; neither can any man say to Him: 'Why dost Thou so?' " And David says, "But our God in heaven; He hath done all things whatsoever He would," And in the Apocalypse is written: "Saith the Lord God, who is and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." And again, "Great and wonderful are Thy works, O Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Thy ways, O King of Ages! Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and magnify Thy name? For Thou only art holy."

[7] On the First Proposition, against My Opponents. At this point I take issue with the thesis (sententiam) of those who assert that there is only one First Principle. For I say: Assume that God—who is good, just, holy, wise, righteous, "faithful in all His words, and holy in all His works," who is almighty and knows all things before they come to pass, as I have shown above—created and arrayed His angels as He chose from the beginning through Himself alone and without any apparent extraneous compulsion from anyone; and assume, further, that that He knew the fate of all His angels before they came into being, because within His providence existed all the causes for which those angels must be found wanting in the future and must remain for all time things of evil and demons in His sight, as nearly all our opponents say: then, without doubt, it follows ineluctably that those angels could never remain good, holy, or humble with their Lord, in whose power of necessity all things occurred from eternity, except to the extent to which God himself had knowledge from the beginning. For one who knows fully all things that shall come to pass is powerless, in so far as he is self-consistent, to do anything except that which he himself has known from eternity that he shall do. This I prove.

[8] On Impossibility. For I say that just as it is impossible for that which is past not to be in the past, so it is impossible for that which is in the future not to be in the future. This is especially true in God, who from the beginning understood and knew that which would come to pass, so that existence as something still to come was possible for an event before it occurred. It was without doubt necessary that the future itself should exist wholly in Him, because He would know and understand from eternity all the causes which are required for bringing the future to fruition. And it is the more true since, if there is only one First Principle, God himself is the sole cause of all causes; and above all if it is fact, as the opponents of truth assert, that God does whatever pleases himself and His might is not affected by anyone.

I say further: If God understood all things from the beginning and knew that His angels would in the future become demons, because of the character which He himself gave them from the beginning (because all the causes which would make those angels become demons in the future arose entirely within His providence and it did not please God to make them otherwise than He did), it of necessity follows that the afore-said angels could never in any way have avoided becoming demons. And this is particularly true because it is impossible that anything which God knows to be future may be in any way changed so that it does not come to pass in the future—above all, in Him who from eternity knows the future completely, as we have just seen explained.

How, then, can the unlearned say that the aforesaid angels could remain good, holy, and humble with their Lord for all time, since it was from eternity utterly impossible in God? They are therefore by the most valid reasoning forced to confess that, in accordance with their thesis God knowingly and in full awareness created and made His angels of such imperfection from the beginning that they could in no way escape evil. And so God himself, of whom the words good, holy, just, wise, and righteous were used above, who is above all praise, as was previously declared, was the whole cause and origin of all evil—which is obviously to be denied. For this reason we are required to acknowledge two principles. One is good. The other is evil, the source and cause of the imperfection of the angels and also of all evil."

[9] A Reply to the Foregoing. But perchance someone will say: The wisdom and providence which God himself had from the beginning, induced in His own creatures no unavoidable necessity to do good or to do evil. For this, perhaps, they might offer an illustration thus: If a certain man in a mansion should see another man walking of his own free will along a way," one might perchance say that it is not the wisdom nor the foresight of him in the mansion which makes the other man walk along the way, even though the former is fully cognizant of and sees the way the other is going.

So with God. Although He knew fully and foresaw from eternity the fate of all His angels, His wisdom and providence did not make His angels become demons, but they became demons and things of evil by their own will, because they did not wish to remain holy and humble before their Lord, but wickedly puffed themselves up in pride against Him.

[10] Rejection of the Preceding Illustration. One must in truth reject this very misleading illustration. Since God in himself was—in the view of our opponents—from the beginning wholly the cause of all His angels, they indubitably derived exclusively and essentially from Him, in a way that was pleasing to Him, the character, the formation or creation, which God himself gave them. And, according to these persons, that which the angels were, they were through Him wholly, in all their causes which made it inevitable for them to become demons in the characteristics, nor did they derive anything at all from any other than Him alone, nor did it please their God to create or make the angels otherwise from the beginning. For these persons believe that had He so wished, He could most easily have made them otherwise. And so it seems clear that God did not seek to make His angels perfect from the beginning, but knowingly and in full awareness endowed them with all future. This was, of necessity, within the power of God, in whom all things occur inevitably from eternity. Whence, the assertion that the wisdom or providence of God did not cause His angels to become things of evil and demons is not valid in the same sense as is the statement that the foresight of the man in the mansion did not cause the other man to walk a long the way. Above all, this is true because he who walked along the way is not the creature of him who is in the mansion, nor does he have his being or even his strength from him. But if one had his strength from the other and all the causes whatsoever which were necessary for completion of that journey—just as the aforesaid angels, according to the belief of our opponents, had them from their God—it would be untrue to say that the foresight of the man in the mansion did not make the other man walk along the way, for it is clear that the latter would walk only because of the former, as is most plainly explained above with reference to God. And so no man can rationally condemn those angels when, owing to the character which they had from their Lord, they could do no other than they did. In the same way that an Ethiopian cannot change his skin or a leopard his spots, because of the nature which they have from their maker, so the angels, if we accept the belief of our opponents, could in no way avoid evil, because of the character which their God gave to them from the beginning. This is a most wicked belief.

But now our opponents may, if they can, eagerly try another way of escape. For they plainly say: Had He wished it, God might well from the beginning have made His angels of such perfection that they would have been quite unable to sin or to do evil, and this on three counts, which are that He is almighty, that He knows all things from eternity, and that His omnipotence is not qualified by anyone. But God was not willing to make them of such perfection; and they advance this reason: If God had from the beginning made His angels of such perfection that they could commit no sin or evil of any kind but inevitably must obey their

Lord, the Lord himself would have given them no thanks for their obedience or service. For thus God could say to them: I give you no thanks for your service, since you cannot act otherwise. Perhaps our opponents might offer an illustration of this point: If a certain lord had a servant "who knew the will of his lord" in all things and could do nothing at all except follow it, this lord they say, would give no thanks at all to his servant for his service, because the latter would be unable to act otherwise.

[11] On the Free Will of the Angels. And thus, they say, God created His angels of such nature from the beginning that they could at their pleasure do good or evil; and they call this "free will" (*liberum arbitrium*) or, according to some of them, "choice" (*arbitrium*), to will a certain free strength or power by which he to whom it is given is equally capable of good or evil. And so they insist that God in reason and justice could allot glory or punishment to the angels; that is to say, they might receive punishment because they were able to do good and did not. Thus God could reasonably say to them: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me to drink," 1 and so on. This is as if He were to say: You were able to refrain from giving but because you gave, therefore do you in reason and justice possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then, on the other hand, the Lord himself could reasonably say to sinners: "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me not to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me not to drink," and so on. This is as if He were to say: You were able to give and did not; therefore, by reason and justice will you go to the fire eternal. For, they say, if they had no power at all to give Him to eat or drink, by what reason could the Lord himself have said to them, "for I was hungry and you gave me not to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me not to drink," and so on? Therefore, they affirm, God did not wish to create His angels perfect, that is, of such perfection that they were quite unable to sin or to do evil, for the Lord himself would have shown them no favor for their service, as has already been said.

They also say that God was not willing to create the angels of such nature that they could always do only evil and not good, because the aforesaid angels could reasonably excuse themselves, saying: We were unable to do anything but evil because of the character which you gave us from the beginning. So they say that God created His angels of such character from the beginning that they could do good and evil. As a result the Lord himself could reasonably judge His angels, in that they were able to sin and had not sinned, or they could refrain from sin and had sinned. And thus our opponents unwisely exult at our expense.

[12] Refutation of the Thesis of Our Opponents. I shall now clarify what has just been said, namely, their declaration that if God had made His angels perfect from the beginning, in such perfection that

they would have been unable to sin at all or to do evil, the Lord would have given them no thanks for their service because they would have been unable to do otherwise. I am convinced that their statement greatly strengthens my position. For if God shows favor to anyone for his service, this seems to me necessarily to follow: namely, that there is something wanting to God and to His will, that He wishes for and desires something done which does not yet exist, or that He desires to have what He does not have. And so, pursuant to this, it seems that we can serve God by fulfilling what is wanting to His will or by rendering to Him something which He needs and desires, either for Himself or for others, as the Gospel text quoted above clearly implies, to wit: "For I was hungry and you gave me to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me to drink," and so on; and again, "As long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me." And again, Christ said to Jerusalem, "How often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldst not?" And the Lord, speaking through Ezechiel to Samaria, says, "Thy uncleanness is execrable. Because I desired to cleanse thee and thou art not cleansed from thy filthiness." From this it seems manifest that the will of God and of His Son, Jesus Christ, was not then wholly fulfilled. This would be impossible, were there only one First Principle, good, holy, just, and perfect.

Hence, this is the basis on which we can serve God and Christ, when we carry out their will with the aid of the true Father, namely, by alleviating hunger and other hurtful things among the creatures of the good Lord. Then the Lord himself may thank us for fulfilling that which He wishes for and desires to exist. And this seems to uphold my thesis, for neither God nor man can desire or wish anything unless first He have that which He does not desire and which troubles Him, either on His own account or on another's behalf. In particular, to declare that this Principle could be burdened with anything which He does not desire, and that there could be something which could trouble Him and make Him sorrowful on His own behalf or for others seems quite in contradiction to the position of those who say that there is only one First Principle, whole and perfect.

[This could not be] unless He were divided against Himself, harmful to His very self and His Son, that is to say, by Himself alone without extraneous compulsion from anyone doing that which would be wholly contrary to Himself and to His own in the future, that which would make Him sad, sorrowful, and dolorous. For that Lord who, according to our opponents, created male and female and all other living things says in Genesis, "And being touched inwardly with sorrow of heart, he said, 'I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth, from man even to beasts, from the creeping thing even to the fowls of the air, for it repenteth me that I have made them.'" This the true God most certainly would not do in and of himself, were there but one First Principle, holy and perfect. However, the above text can be interpreted as though He said: There is another, a principle of evil, which makes my heart to sorrow by so acting against my creation that it compels me to destroy the created from the face of the earth because of their sins. This principle makes me repent that I made them, that is to say, [makes me] suffer on their account. On the other hand, following the doctrine of one Principle, the text is best understood thus: It repenteth me that I have made them; namely, I shall have to undergo suffering and

pain in the future, through myself alone, because I made them. And so it seems manifest, according to the doctrine of those persons who believe that there is only one First Principle, that this God and His Son, Jesus Christ, who, according to them are one and the same, causes Himself sadness, sorrow, and suffering, bearing pain in Himself without any extraneous intervention by anyone. But it is impossible and wicked to believe this of the true God.

[13] On the Principle of Evil. Therefore, it behooves us of necessity to confess that there is another principle, one of evil, who works most wickedly against the true God and His creation; and this principle seems to move God against His own creation and the creation against its God, and causes God himself to wish for and desire that which in and of himself He could never wish for at all. Thus it is that through the compulsion of the evil enemy God yearns and is wearied, relents, is burdened, and is served by His own creatures. Whence God says to His people through Isaiah: "But thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thy iniquities"; and again, "I am weary of bearing them." And Malachi says, "You have wearied the Lord with your words." And David says, "And [he] repented according to the multitude of His mercies." And the Apostle says in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, "For we are God's coadjutors." Of the compulsion of God, however, the Lord himself says to Satan in the Book of Job, "But thou hast moved me against him, that I should afflict him without cause." And through Ezechiel the same Lord says, "And when they caught the souls of my people, they gave life to their souls. And they violated me among my people, for a handful of barley and a piece of bread, to kill souls which should not die and to save souls alive which should not live." And the Lord, lamenting over His people, says through Isaiah: "Because I called and you did not answer; I spoke and you did not hear, and you did evil in my eyes, and you have chosen the things that displease me." "

And so it appears plainly that this concept of how one may serve God buttresses my argument. For if there were only one First Principle, holy, just, and good, as has been declared of the true Lord God in the foregoing, He would not make Himself sorrowful, sad, or dolorous; neither would He bear pain in himself, nor grow weary or repent, nor be aided by anyone, nor be burdened with the sins of anyone, nor yearn or wish for anything to be done which was delayed in coming to pass, since nothing at all could be done contrary to His will; nor could He be moved by anyone or injured, nor could there be anything which would trouble God, but all things would obey Him from overwhelming necessity. And most especially would this be true because all things would be by Him and in Him and of Him," in all their dispositions, if there were only one First Principle, holy and just, as I have shown above in discussing the true God.

[14] On Service to God. From this comes the basis for our service to God, in that we may fulfill His works, or rather, that God may con- summate through us that which He proposes and wishes to be done. In this wise He achieved salvation of His• people through the Lord Jesus, although Christ did nothing good through himself or even by free will. For He said of himself: "I cannot of myself do

anything"; and again, "But the Father, who abideth in me, he doth the works." " And so, we serve God when we fulfill His will with His help, not that we are able through free will to do anything good of which He himself is not the cause and principle. Thus, the Blessed James says in his Epistle, "Every best gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of Lights." " And in the Gospel of John, Christ says, "No man can come to me except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him." And of himself, He said: "I cannot of myself do anything. As I hear, so I judge"; and again, "But the Father, who abideth in me, he doth the works." And the Apostle says to the Ephesians: "For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, for it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man may glory." " And the same Apostle says to the Romans, "So then it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth but of God that showeth mercy.

"Being confident of this very thing, that He who hath begun a good work in you will perfect it unto the day of our Lord Christ Jesus"; and again, "For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will." And in his second Epistle to the Corinthians the same Apostle says: "And such confidence we have through Christ toward the Lord. Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God, who also hath made us fit ministers of the new testament, not in the letter but in the spirit. For the letter killeth, but the spirit quickeneth." And John the Baptist said, "A man cannot receive anything unless it be given him from heaven." And David says: "Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Unless the Lord keep the city, he watcheth in vain that keepeth it." " And Jeremiah says, "I know, O Lord, that the way of a man is not his, neither is it in a man to walk and to direct his steps." And Paul says to the Corinthians, "But by the grace of God I am what I am." " And in the parables of Solomon it is written: "Counsel and equity is mine, prudence is mine, strength is mine By me kings reign, and lawgivers decree just things. By me princes rule and the mighty decree justice"; and again, "The steps of a man are guided by the Lord; but who is the man that can understand his own way." " And in the Gospel of Matthew, Christ says: "All things are delivered to me by my Father; and no one knoweth the Son but the Father, neither doth anyone know the Father but the Son and he to whom it shall please the Son to reveal Him." And in the Gospel of John, He says of himself: "I am the way, the truth, and the light. No man cometh to the Father, but by me"; and again, "For without me you can do no-thing." And in the Gospel of the Blessed Luke, He says, "Strive to enter by the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, shall seek to enter and shall not be able."

[15] On Destroying the Concept of Free Will. From this it is quite evident that we cannot serve God by doing anything good by free will, as a result of which He would give thanks to us as if for our own individual strength and power—that is, a good of which He is not the cause and principle, as was plainly pointed out above. And most especially is this so because we have no powers at all of ourselves, as the Blessed Peter says in the Acts of the Apostles, in regard to the lame man made whole: "Ye men of Israel, why wonder you at this or why look you upon us, as if by our own strength or power we had made this

man to walk?" This is as if he had said: Not we but "the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" did this.

And so it clearly seems that whatever of good is found in the creatures of God is directly from Him and of Him," and He brings the good into being and is its cause, as was explained above. If evil, however, is found in the people of God," it is not truly from God himself, nor of Him, nor does He bring it into being, nor was He nor is He its cause, as Jesus the son of Sirach says, "He hath commanded no man to do wickedly, and He hath given no man license to sin." This is to be understood to mean that He did not of himself absolutely and directly do so. And also, no evil can come from a creature of God, itself good, unless there be a cause of evil. For through Ezechiel the Lord says: "The rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded. Iniquity is risen up into a rod of impiety; not of them nor of the people nor of the noise of them--therefore, from some other source! And Christ says in the Gospel of Matthew: "The kingdom of heaven is likened to a man that sowed good seed in his field; but while men were asleep, his enemy came by night and over-sowed cockle among the wheat, and went his way." And David says: "O God, the heathens are come into thine inheritance; they have defiled thy holy temple; they have made Jerusalem as a place to keep fruit." And the Lord through the prophet Joel says: "For a nation is come up upon my land, strong and without number; his teeth are like the teeth of a lion, and his cheek teeth as of a lion's whelp. He hath laid my vineyard waste, and hath pilled off the bark of my fig tree; he hath stripped it bare and cast it away; the branches thereof are made white." So one may clearly understand that pride and wickedness and impiety, the weeds and the pollution of the holy temple of God, and the wasting of His vineyard, cannot proceed exclusively and essentially from the good God or from a good creature of His which is wholly from Him in all its characteristics. It now follows, therefore, that there is another principle, one of evil, who is the source and cause of all pride and wickedness, of all defilement of the people, and of all other evils.

[16] On the Contention of My Opponents That God Did Not Wish to Create His Angels Perfect. I now intend to discuss my opponents' contention that God did not wish to create His angels perfect, that is, of such perfection that they should forever be capable only of good actions, never of evil, nor, on the other hand, that they should be forever capable only of evil, never of good; but, in their words, that He created them of such nature that they could do good or do evil according to their pleasure, as may be seen set forth above.

Now, I say that if it did not please God to create His angels of such nature that they were capable only of always doing good, never evil, or capable of always doing evil, never good, but it pleased Him to create them of such nature that they were capable of doing both good and evil, the statement must be understood to mean "capable of so acting at different times." For it is impossible that angels could have been so created by God that simultaneously, at one and the same time, they were capable of doing both good and evil. From this, if we accept the doctrine stated, it follows of necessity that the aforesaid

angels did good acts and evil acts, not merely good alone or evil alone, but in very truth both good and evil. And so it seems clear that these angels could in no way for all time escape evil, because of the character which they had from their Lord. And thus, according to this, God would be the cause and origin of that evil; which is an impossibility, and it is foolish to suggest it.

And yet perhaps at this point my opponents, speaking calmly at first and then shouting, would cry out, saying: Indeed these angels were always capable of doing both good and evil, had they so desired, because they had free will from God, that is, a free strength or power by which they were equally capable of good and evil at their pleasure. And thus, they would declare, God is not the First Cause of that evil, because the angels sinned by the free will given to them, by their own choice.

[17] Proof That There Is No Free Will. If anyone should scrutinize minutely the arguments set forth above, he would see that my position is not weakened by the concept of free will, meaning a free strength or power which our opponents say was given by God, by which the angels were capable of good or evil at their pleasure. Yet, in the opinion of the wise, it will appear impossible for anyone to have a potency for two contraries simultaneously, at one and the same time; that is, for one to have a potency for doing good for all time and for doing evil for all time. And especially is this true in God, who has complete knowledge of the future, and according to whose wisdom all things are done of necessity from eternity.

And it is particularly puzzling how the good angels would have been capable of hating goodness like unto their own, which existed from eternity as did its cause, and of delighting in wickedness, which did not yet exist and which is the exact opposite of goodness; and this without cause if, as the unenlightened say, there was no cause of evil at all. And especially is this so because it is written in the Book of Jesus the son of Sirach: "Every beast loveth its like, so also every man him that is nearest to himself. All flesh shall consort with the like to itself and every man shall associate himself to his like." And again, "Birds resort unto their like, so truth will return to them that practice her." And so it seems clear that the good angels would have sought rather to choose the good like unto themselves, which existed from eternity, than to spurn good and cleave to evil, which was not in existence (nor indeed was its cause [Satan], if I follow the belief of my opponents); yet it does not seem possible that anything can come into being without a cause. For so it is written: "It is impossible that whatever has a beginning should have no cause"; and again, "Everything which changes from potency to effect needs a cause by which it can be brought into effect." And also, according to my opponents, that which existed, namely good, had less effect than that which did not exist, namely evil; and this despite the fact that it is written, "A thing must have existence before it can have an effect." And also, one should clearly recognize that if a cause should wholly retain its original character, nothing would result from it other than that which it first produced. For every new effect is a result of a new factor of some sort, as is written: "For if something which was not an agent becomes an agent, this inevitably takes place because

of a new factor of some sort." From this, one must realize that if the dispositions of the agent were to continue just as they originally were, and if it were, up to that point, affected by nothing new either internally or externally, assuredly the agent would have less the function of causing-to-exist than that of nonexistence, and nonexistence would persist indefinitely. For just as from diversity something different may arise, so from uniformity sameness persists.

And if, in fact, none of the angels could have sinned without free will, God would in no wise have given it, since He would have known that from this cause alone His kingdom would be corrupted. Moreover, the corruption of the angels would of necessity have come from the God who "is above all praise," which is a wicked thing to suppose. It follows from this that there is another principle, one of evil, who is the source and cause of the corruption of the angels and of all evil.

[18] On Free Will: That the Angels Had It Not. Whence, it is obvious to the wise that the angels discussed above never had any such choice from God, that is, such power to desire, to know, and to do only good for all time, and not evil. If they had had, they would from overwhelming necessity have done and desired good for all time, never evil.

Therefore, by what reasoning, by what audacity, can the unenlightened say that the aforesaid angels could indeed always do only good if they chose? For from God, who knows the future completely, they had no potency, desire, knowledge, will, nor any other attribute (causa) whatsoever by which they could wholly avoid evil, as was made quite clear above. It may somehow be said, among men who are completely ignorant of the future and of all the causes which necessitate doing good or evil for all time or on different occasions, that the angels had such strength or power from God that they could do good and evil for all time. It seems, however, most clearly false in God, who has complete knowledge of the future, who knows from eternity all causes (the effect of which is to render it impossible for that which is future not to be in the future), according to whose wisdom all things are of necessity done from eternity.

So it happens that conflicting statements are many times heard among men who are entirely ignorant of the future or of the truth of things; to wit, when they declare that what never shall be may be, and what most certainly shall be cannot be. For instance, we sometimes say that Peter may live until tomorrow and that he may die today. Although it is impossible for Peter both to live until tomorrow and to die today, yet, because we are ignorant of the future, as of all the causes which control the life and death of Peter, we affirm that which is impossible to be possible, and that which is possible we say to be impossible. If, however, we knew the future completely and also all the causes which control the life or death of Peter, then we would not say that Peter may live until tomorrow and that he may die today.

For if we knew that Peter would die today, then we would say that it is clearly necessary for Peter to die today, or that it is impossible for him to live until tomorrow. And if we knew that he would live until tomorrow, then we would say that it is clearly necessary for him to live until tomorrow, or that it is impossible for Peter to die today. However, because we do not know the future, we put forward the possible for the impossible and the impossible for the possible. But this cannot be true of Him who has complete knowledge of all the future.

I say further: Suppose a certain man was in a house with Peter and unquestionably saw him. And another man outside this house inquired of the one within, "Can it be that Peter is in the house?" If he who knows unquestionably that Peter is in the house because he sees him before his very eyes should answer the other, "It may be that Peter is in the house and it may be that he is not," there is no doubt that he would be speaking wrongly and contrary to his own knowledge in saying, "It may be that Peter is not in the house." For he knows without any doubt whatever that Peter was in the house because he saw him before his very eyes.

So I say of the free will said by my opponent to be given by God: As pertains to the God who knows wholly all the future, in whom are known from eternity all the causes which render it impossible for that which is future not to be in the future, in whose wisdom are all things of necessity done from eternity, the aforesaid angels never had from Him a free capacity for freedom to choose, to know or to do good for all time. This is so especially because God himself without doubt knew and saw the end of all His angels before they came into being, just as the man who saw Peter and knew him unquestionably to be in the house would be speaking wrongly if he had said, "It may be that Peter is not in the house." So I say in the matter of free will of the angels in God that it was never true to say that the angels could not sin; this is especially true in respect of a God who wholly knows the future. And to say that they did not wish to sin signifies nothing, because good angels do not, without a cause, wish to do evil. For the wise realize that it is impossible for the good, without a cause, to hate good and desire evil, since, as was stated above, nothing at all can exist without a cause. It was, therefore, necessary in God for those angels to become things of evil and demons in the future, because within His providence existed without exception all the causes by which they must be found wanting in the future. Without doubt, it was impossible in Him that they could remain good and holy for all time.

In the view of men who are ignorant of the future and of the whole truth it may, perhaps, somehow be said that the aforesaid angels could both do good and do evil for all time. But in the view of men who know the whole truth, be it of the future or of all causes which are requisite to doing good for all time or to so doing on different occasions, it is absolutely impossible that the angels could have freedom to do good for all time, together with freedom to do evil for all time; rather, in their view, it would be wholly necessary for these angels to be found wanting in had from God—as the statement of the dullards asserts—a free capacity or the freedom to do good for all time, but from overwhelming necessity [must]

act in a completely evil manner in the future, as was clearly explained in the preceding. To believe that they had [free will] is most evil and foolish.

[19] On the Thesis of Master William. I have now no intention of overlooking the thesis of Master William," albeit he may seem to be wise in many matters. For I have heard him discussing ideas such as the following: that the angels were not made perfect by God from the beginning, because their God could not make them perfect. The reason for this is that God could not and cannot make anyone like Himself or coequal with Himself in any way; and although God himself may be called almighty by many, yet this He cannot do at all. And thus, in so much as they were inferior to God in beauty and greatness—that is to say, as they were not like Him or coequal with Him—these angels could be found wanting to the extent that they could covet His beauty and greatness. So, one reads of Lucifer in Isaiah: "I will exalt my throne above the stars. I will be like the Most High." And thus, such a one would perhaps say that on this account we cannot reasonably blame God for not making His angels so perfect that they could not have coveted His beauty and greatness at all, because their God could not do so, as is stated above.

I have decided to refute the doctrine just stated with the most cogent argument. For if we cannot reasonably blame God because He could not make his angels so perfect that they would not covet His beauty and greatness, for the reason that He could not make them like Himself or coequal with Himself, much less therefore can we blame those angels because they could by no means avoid coveting the beauty and greatness of God as a result of the character which they had from their maker; in other words, because He could not make them so perfect that they would not covet His beauty and greatness.

I say again: If God could not make His angels of such perfection that they would not so covet His beauty and greatness and thus would not, for this reason, become demons, neither could those angels avoid that evil in any way. And so, according to certain persons, it necessarily follows that all angels and indeed men who now are saved are bound always to covet that beauty and greatness and always to sin against their God by this covetousness, and of necessity to become demons because of it, just as they say befell the other angels. And this is true particularly because God could not nor cannot nor ever will be able to make anyone like Himself or coequal with Himself in any way.

And if Master William should say: They who were saved could not covet any more or sin, because they were enlightened and subtly warned by the punishment of the other angels, who became demons through their covetousness, this may be answered as follows: God, who above was called good, holy, and just, would be the sole cause and principle of the punishment and ruin of all His angels. For He would have inflicted eternal punishment on His angels without reason or justice, in that He could not make them of such perfection that they would not covet His beauty and greatness, nor could those

angels in any way avoid that evil, because they had been created at an earlier time than the other angels, who were enlightened by their punishment and fall. Indeed, those angels, who, as many say, became demons, could not be enlightened and warned by the punishment of other angels, because there were no other angels created before them. And so the aforesaid angels could with reason bring most very great complaint against their Lord for afflicting them with those countless punishments, the more so because He could not make them so perfect that they would not covet His beauty and greatness; therefore those angels could not by any means avoid that covetousness. Hence, it is utterly amazing that it can ever enter the mind of any wise man that God, who is good, holy, and just, should condemn His angels for all time, afflicting them with eternal torture, because He could not make them of such perfection that they would not envy His beauty and greatness, nor could they ever in any way receive that perfection from Him.

[20] Concerning the Angels. And if it be objected: Although God cannot make His angels like Himself or coequal with Himself, yet He could indeed have perfected them, had He so wished, to such a degree that they would never have envied His beauty. But He did not choose to do this, because they had free will from God, that is, the free capacity or the freedom to envy or not to envy His beauty and greatness, at their pleasure. Thus, there is no validity in what has been said above to the effect that God could not make His angels so perfect that they would not envy His beauty and greatness, because He could not make them like Himself or coequal with Himself in any way.

And thus it is obvious, if we accept the doctrine discussed above, that God did not choose to make His angels so perfect that they could not envy His beauty and greatness; but, knowingly and in full awareness, He made them of such imperfection that they could not in the least avoid covetousness, and He bestowed on them all the causes by which He knew those angels would fall in the future; and particularly [is it evident] in Him, who wholly knows all the future, in whom all causes by which those angels were to be covetous in the future were known from the beginning, by whom all things are done of necessity from eternity, as was made sufficiently clear above where free will was discussed. And so, to the wise, it is obvious, according to the above doctrine, that God cannot absolve Himself on rational grounds, because He did not choose to avert that evil in any way, but knowingly and in full awareness created His angels of such imperfection that it was from eternity impossible in Him for them not to covet His beauty and greatness.

From this one may know that those angels did not have from God a free will by which they could entirely avoid covetousness, and especially not from a God who knows directly all the future, in whom it is impossible that that which is future, with all the causes which determine it, can fail to be in the future. And this is so particularly because, if there is only one First Principle, He is directly the cause of all causes. It follows therefore of necessity, according to the said doctrine, that God would be the first

cause of all envy and indeed of all evil, as is written, "He who provides the occasion for harm should be held to have done the harm." One most certainly cannot believe this of the true God.

Part II. On Creation

[1] The Contention of Our Opponents That God Is the Creator or Maker of All Things. Although our opponents have no argument based on truth, yet they may perchance still spurn the arguments set forth above and loudly assert: These words deserve no credence at all, for they represent the opinions of men and the argumentations of philosophers, of which the Apostle says to the Colossians, "Beware lest any man cheat you by philosophy and vain deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ." And so, perchance, they might say that one need give absolutely no credence to two principles, for the reasons advanced above because they were not at all confirmed by testimony of the Holy Scriptures and, in particular, because one cannot discover through biblical texts that there is any god other than the true Lord God, creator or maker of all, omnipotent, eternal or everlasting, ancient, without beginning or end.

To prove that the true Lord God is the creator or maker of all, they may perhaps vigorously fortify their argument by the following texts and others like them. It is written in the Apocalypse: "Thou art worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power, because Thou hast created all things, and for Thy will they were and have been created"; and again: "And the angel whom I saw standing upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and he swore by Him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven and the things which are therein, and the earth and the things which are in it, and the sea and the things which are therein, that time shall be no longer." And the Apostle says to the Hebrews, "For every house is built by some man, but He that created all things is God." And Jesus the son of Sirach says: "He that liveth forever created all things together"; and [the Book of Wisdom says,] "For He created all things that they might be." And the apostles in their Acts say, "Lord, thou art He that didst make heaven and earth, the sea, and all things that are in them." And Paul, in the same book, says to the Athenians: "That I preach to you God, who made the world and all things therein, He, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is He served with men's hands as though He needed anything, seeing it is He who giveth to all life and breath and all things." And John in his Gospel says, "All things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made."

[2] That God Is Called Father of All. Not only is the Lord our God called the creator or the maker of all, but He is called the Father of all, as the Blessed Paul says to the Ephesians: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in us all." And again, "For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom all paternity in heaven and earth is named." And in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, the same Apostle says, "Yet to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we unto Him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things and we by Him." And he says to the Romans, "For of Him and by Him and in Him are all things." Also, all things were created in the Lord Jesus Christ, and by Him and in Him all things were created, as Paul says to the Colossians of Christ, "who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for in Him were all things created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominations, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him and in Him. And He is before all, and in Him all things consist."

Thus our opponents appear to confirm their doctrine many times over by these texts and others like them.

[3] On the Omnipotence, the Eternity, and the Sempiternity of God. Our opponents may indeed advance certain passages from Holy Scriptures to show that the aforesaid Lord our God is omnipotent and eternal or everlasting and ancient, insisting that there is no other power or domination but His, as David says: "For I have known that the Lord is great, and our God is above all gods. Whatsoever the Lord pleased he hath done, in heaven, in earth, in the sea, and in all the deeps." And the Apostle, in the first Epistle to Timothy, says, "I charge thee before God, who quickeneth all things and before Christ Jesus, who gave testimony under Pontius Pilate, a good confession, that thou keep the commandment without spot, blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; which in His times He shall show, the King who is the Blessed and only Mighty, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords." And in the Apocalypse is written, "I give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty." And the Apostle says to the Romans, "For there is no power but from God, and those [powers] that are, are ordained of God."

Moreover, that the true Lord God is eternal, or everlasting and ancient, is shown by the following texts: David says, ". . . that ye may relate it in another generation. For this is God, our God unto eternity, and forever and ever. He shall rule us forevermore." And Isaiah says, "For thus saith the Lord High and Eminent that inhabiteth eternity." And the Apostle says to the Romans, "According to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret from eternity (which now is made manifest by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the precept of the eternal God).

Of the sempiternity of this true God Isaiah says, "The Lord is the everlasting God, who hath created the ends of the earth." And Jeremiah says, "But the Lord is the true God, He is the living God and the everlasting king."

Of the antiquity of the Lord, Daniel says: "I beheld therefore in the vision of the night, and lo, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and he came even to the Ancient of days"; and again, "Till the Ancient of days came."

Thus indeed they might say that, because of these texts quoted and others like them, one must firmly believe in one sole God, Lord and omnipotent Prince, who is eternal or everlasting, and ancient, as seems to be made manifest above.

[4] A Reply to the Objections Raised Above. It is my intent, with the aid of Jesus Christ, to resolve their objections in accordance with my concept. Now, in the first place, I wish to clarify by scriptural references the precise meaning of "creating" and "making," in connection with which our Lord God is called "creator" and "maker" of all; and secondly, I wish to show what is meant by "all" and other terms of universality in the Holy Scriptures.

I perceive the words "to create" or "to make" used throughout the Scriptures in three senses. Now, I say: It is "to create" or "to make" when the true Lord God adds to the essences of those beings who were already exceedingly good something which ordains them to aid those who are to be saved. In this sense, our Lord Jesus Christ was ordained bishop by the true Lord God and "anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power," so that He could free all those "oppressed by the devil"; and in the same sense the angels and ministers of God the Father were made so that they might aid those who receive the inheritance of salvation. Sometimes the words "to create" or "to make" are used when God himself adds something to the essences of those who had become evil and disposes them to good works. I also call it "to create" or "to make" when something is permitted by God himself to him who is wholly evil, or to his minister, who cannot achieve what he desires unless the good Lord himself endures his deceit patiently for a time, to His own honor and to the shame of that most wicked enemy of His.

[5] On the First Meaning of "Creating" or "Making." As for the first meaning of "creating" or "making," I have sought to provide the clearest proof as it appears in passages from Holy Scripture: Thus the Blessed Paul, referring to the creation of our Lord Jesus Christ, says to the Colossians, "Lie not to one another; stripping [yourselves] of the old man with his deeds, and putting on the new, him who is renewed unto knowledge of God according to the image of Him that created him." And the same Apostle says to the

Ephesians, "And be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, who according to God is created in justice and holiness of truth." And through Isaiah the Lord says: "Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the just; let the earth be opened and bud forth a savior, and let justice spring up together; I the Lord have created him."

Of the "making" of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, moreover, the Blessed Peter says in the Acts of the Apostles, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know most certainly that God hath made both Lord and Christ, this same Jesus whom you have crucified." And Paul says to the Hebrews: "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly vocation, consider the apostle and high priest of our confession, Jesus, who is faithful to Him that made Him"; and again, "For to which of the angels hath He said at any time, 'Thou art my Son, today have I be- gotten Thee'?"

Moreover, in regard to the making of the good spirits and angels," who were made by the true Lord God, the Blessed Apostle says to the Hebrews: "And to the angels indeed He saith, 'He that maketh his angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire' "; and again, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?" And the Lord says through Isaiah, "Go, ye swift angels," and so on.

[6] That "to Create" or "to Make" May Mean to Create or Make from Something, as from Some Pre-existent Matter. From the foregoing, one must firmly believe that our Lord Jesus Christ and the other good angels of the true Father are not said to be "created" or "made" by the true Lord God in the sense that their essence originated only with this creation or production, nor [is it said] that their essence was constituted out of nothingness in the sense apparently asserted by our opponents, who believe that for God "to create" is to make something exclusively and essentially from nothing. Their opinion is most clearly refuted by the testimony of Holy Scriptures. For the angel of the Lord says to Joseph in the Gospel of Matthew, "Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit." He did not say, "is created from nothing." And in the Book of Wisdom it is written, "For Thy almighty hand, which made the world of matter without form, was not unable," and so on. And in Genesis it is written, "And God formed man of the slime of the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life; and man became a living soul." And Jesus the son of Sirach says: "The most High hath created medicines out of the earth"; and again, "God created man of the earth and made him after his own image."

And so it is clear that in the judgment of the wise, we may with most excellent reason reject the doctrine of our opponents by the testimony of the Scriptures.

[7] On Creating and Making. Therefore my exposition given above is true; to wit, that "to create" or "to make" means to add something to the essences of those who already were exceedingly good, as has been demonstrated with sufficient clarity in the foregoing. This is the way I construe its meaning. The good are said to be created and made by the true Lord God, that is, formed by Him for the salvation of sinners. It is in this sense that the Apostle speaks of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Hebrews: " 'What is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that Thou visitest him?' " and so on; and " 'Thou hast set him over the works of thy hands.' " And David, in the character of Christ, as we believe, says, "But I am appointed king by Him over Zion His holy mountain." And so, according to this concept, this creation or production of the good is a noble one, of which, for instance, Ecclesiastes says: "He hath made all things good in their time"; and again, "I have learned that all the works which God hath made continue forever; we cannot add anything nor take away from those things which God hath made that He may be feared." And Jesus the son of Sirach says, "All the works of the Lord are exceeding good." ° And in Ecclesiasticus is written, "O how desirable are all His works; all these things live and remain forever, and for every use all things obey Him." And David says: "How great are Thy works, O Lord? Thou hast made all things in wisdom"; and again, "By Thy ordinance the day goeth on, for all things serve Thee"; and again, "For He spoke and they were made, He commanded and they were created. He hath established them forever and for ages of ages."

And so it clearly seems that this noble creation and production of the good is established forever and for ages of ages by the true Lord God. But if one follows the doctrine of our opponents as I interpret it, this cannot be so, most particularly if all the heavens which now are, and the earth, and all the elements are to be completely destroyed by the heat of fire as, in their opinion as I interpret it, the Blessed Peter testified.

[8] On the Second Meaning of "Creating" and "Making". I now intend to treat of the second meaning of "making" and "creating," of which I said above that "to create" and "to make" mean to add something to the essence of those who had been made evil which disposes them unto good works. ° For the Apostle says to the Ephesians, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus in good works, which God hath prepared that we should walk in them." And David says: "All expect of Thee that Thou give them food in season. What Thou givest to them, they shall gather up; when Thou openest Thy hand, they shall all be filled with good. But if Thou tumest away Thy face, they shall be troubled; Thou shalt take away their breath, and they shall fail and shall return to their dust. Thou shalt send forth Thy spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth."

[9] Explanation of the Text of Isaiah "I Am the Lord, and There Is None Else." The Lord says through Isaiah: "I am the Lord and there is none else. I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil, I the Lord that do all these things." This text can be interpreted as though its meaning were: There is no Lord but I who "form the light"—which is Christ, who is the "true light, which enlighteneth

every man that cometh into this world," as the Blessed John says in his Gospel. And I who "create darkness"—which means to ordain the Gentile people to good works, as was set forth above; they who were become part of darkness, walking in darkness, as one reads in the Gospel, "The people of the Gentiles that walked in darkness hath seen great light." And the Apostle says to the Ephesians: "For you were heretofore darkness, but now light in the Lord. Walk then as children of the light." "I make peace"—that is, Christ, who was our peace, as the Apostle says of Him to the Ephesians, "For He is our peace who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition"; or [Christ], who made peace between the people of the Gentiles and the people of Israel, as is contained in the same Epistle: "[That He might make the two in himself] into one new man, making peace, and might reconcile both to God in one body. And coming, He preached peace to you that were afar off and peace to them that were nigh; for by Him we have access both in one Spirit to the Father." And I "create evil"—that is, I appoint the people of Israel, who had become evil, if unto good works, as Christ says of them in the Gospel of Matthew, "you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" It is in this sense that the Lord is said to create darkness and evil. But this is not possible, according to the opinion of our opponents, who believe that "to create" is to make something from nothing. And their opinion is most clearly disproved. For surely, if the true Lord God exclusively and essentially created darkness and evil, undoubtedly He would be the cause and beginning of all evil, which is an utterly vain and wicked conclusion.

[10] On the Making of Those Who Had Become Evil. Moreover Paul says to the Corinthians in his second Epistle, in regard to the making of those who had become evil, "But our sufficiency is from God, who also hath made us fit ministers of the new testament, not in the letter but in the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit quickeneth." And again, the same Apostle says to the Colossians, "Giving thanks to God the Father, who hath made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in the light of truth." And he says to the Corinthians, "If, then, any be in Christ a new creature, the old things are passed away; behold all things are made new." Also, of this making, as is believed, the Blessed John says in the Apocalypse, "And He that sat on the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.'" Now, according to this interpretation, our Lord God is called "creator" or "maker" for constituting sinners unto good works, as is clearly enough explained in the foregoing.

[11] On the Third Meaning of "Creating" and "Making." In regard going to the third meaning of "creating" and "making"—about which I remarked above that one says "to create" or "to make" when something is permitted by the true Lord God to the one who is wholly evil or to his minister, who cannot accomplish his desires unless the good Lord himself suffers the deceit patiently for a time, to His own honor and to the shame of His most wicked enemy—I intend to confirm my interpretation by biblical proofs. For the prophet Ezechiel says of the Assyrian king, who represents the devil: "The cedars in the paradise of God were not higher than he, the fir trees did not equal his top, neither were the plane trees to be compared with him for branches; no tree in the paradise of God was like him in his beauty. For He

made him beautiful and thick set with many branches, and all the trees of pleasure that were in the paradise of God envied him." And the Lord says through Isaiah: "I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire and bringeth forth an instrument for his work. And I have created the killer to destroy"; and again, "I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil, I the Lord that do all these things." And David says, "This sea dragon which thou hast formed to play therein." And in the Book of Job the Lord says to him, "Behold behemoth, whom I made with thee; he eateth grass like an ox." Now, if the Assyrian, the smith, the killer, the darkness, the evil, the dragon, and the behemoth signify him who is the chief principle of all evil, one must necessarily interpret the words, "to create" darkness and evil and the killer, and so on, to mean that God endures from one who is His most wicked enemy deceit and malice against His people for a time, in order to permit them to be trampled underfoot for their sins. So our Lord God is said "to make" the evil which, for our sins, He does not forbid, just as Isaiah says, "But he that is the wise one hath brought evil, and hath not removed his words." And through Jeremiah, the Lord again says, "For I bring evil from the north and great destruction." And through Habakkuk the Lord also says, "For I will raise up the Chaldeans, a bitter and swift nation, marching upon the breadth of the earth to possess the dwelling places that are not their own." And the Lord says through Amos: "Shall the trumpet sound in a city and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil in a city which the Lord hath not done?" And the Blessed Job says, "The tabernacles of robbers abound, and they provoke God boldly, whereas it is He that hath given all into their hands." And the prophet Daniel says of the king of Babylon: "Thou art a king of kings, and the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, and strength, and power, and glory, and all places wherein the children of men and the beasts of the field do dwell; He hath also given the birds of the air into thy hand and hath put all things under thy power." All this must be understood as occurring by the sufferance of the Lord, because of the sins of the people, as Elihu says in the Book of Job: "And upon nations and over all men He maketh a man that is a hypocrite to reign for the sins of the people"--that is, endures his reign because of the sins of the people. In this wise the Apostle says to the Romans, "What if God, willing to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, that He might show the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy." This does not mean, however, that to do evil may be a function directly and essentially of the true Lord God, for were that the case—if there were no evil which the true Lord God had not directly and essentially done—the true Lord God would be fundamentally the cause and beginning of all evil, which is an utterly vain and foolish belief.

Whence, in accordance with our interpretation, we can most intelligibly conclude that God "created" darkness, evil, and murder; "made" the Assyrian; and "formed" the dragon and the many other baneful things noted in the Holy Scriptures; that is to say, He suffers them to prevail over His people for their sins, and in consonance with this, evils are said to be "done" by Him--that is, He gives sufferance for a time to malice directed against His own. And in this sense we can freely concede that Satan was "created" or "made" by the true Lord God—that is, after he was given license to afflict Job—for by permission which he obtained from the true Lord God he did that which he was unable to achieve by

himself. And so he can be said to be "made" by God—that is, he was acknowledged as ruler over the people, not absolutely but, so to speak, indirectly and nonessentially.

And Satan is allowed not only to rule over sinners but also to tempt the just, as is written in the Gospel of the Blessed Matthew about our Lord Jesus Christ, "Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil." And the Blessed Mary says: "And immediately the Spirit drove Him out into the desert. And He was in the desert forty days and forty nights and was tempted by Satan." And the faithful Luke says: "And Jesus, being full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert for the space of forty days, and was tempted by the devil"; and again, "And the temptation being ended, the devil departed from Him for a time." And the same thing may be noted in regard to the Blessed Job, as the Lord himself says to Satan, "Behold, all that he hath is in thy hand." And in particular reference to Job the Lord again says, "Behold, he is hath shut me up with the unjust man and hath delivered me into the hands of the wicked"; and again, "Doth it seem good to Thee that Thou shouldst calumniate me and oppress me, the work of Thy own hands, and help the counsel of the wicked?" And in the Gospel of John, Christ says to Pilate, Satan's minister, "Thou shouldst not have any power against me unless it were given thee from above"; which is to say, conceded to you, and this may be interpreted as meaning from God. And in this way our Lord God is said "to create" evil when for some reasonable cause He does not prohibit it. Of this one finds clear confirmation in the case of the Blessed Job where in the Book of Tobias one reads of Tobias: "Now this trial the Lord therefore permitted to happen to him, that an example might be given to posterity of his patience, as also of holy Job." And the Blessed James says, "You have heard of the patience of Job, and you have seen the end of the Lord."

That the aforesaid texts, moreover, properly should be so interpreted, even according to the concept of those who believe that "to create" means to make something from nothing, is proved as follows: The Apostle says to Timothy, "For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be rejected." And Ecclesiastes says, "He hath made all things good in their time." And it is written in the Book of Wisdom, "For so much then as Thou art just, Thou orderest all things justly." Therefore, if God made and created and justly ordered all things good, He did not create the darkness or evil, nor did He form the dragon. Nor are even our opponents wont to believe that God had formed the devil as a dragon, but rather as a beautiful angel, nor that He had created angels as demons and things of darkness, but rather as angels shining and luminous.

[12] That God Did Not Create Darkness or Evil. Whence, one should give no credence at all to the belief that the true Lord God absolutely and directly created darkness or evil, especially from nothing, which our opponents think is the proper meaning of "to create." And most particularly this is so because the Blessed John can say in the first Epistle: "That God is light and in him there is no darkness," nor, consequently, [darkness] through Him. Therefore, darkness does not fall within that all-inclusive term which the Apostle employs in his Epistle to the Romans: "For of Him and by Him and in Him are all

things," 100 nor yet within that used by the same Apostle with reference to Christ in his Epistle to the Colossians, "For in Him were all things created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominations, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and in Him. And He is before all, and in Him all things consist." Wherefore Christ says of Himself, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life." So, darkness is not created absolutely and directly by our Lord God and His Son Jesus Christ but only in an indirect and relative sense, which was shown clearly enough above; albeit, in keeping with our thesis, the aforesaid texts can be otherwise interpreted, as is seen in some part to have been done in the foregoing. Hence, by using the three senses [of "creation"] discussed above and the various meanings which are assigned in Holy Scriptures to "all" and other terms of universality, the texts quoted above can be given their correct interpretation in accordance with our belief. That is, the Lord our God created and made all things, namely, heaven and earth, the sea, and all things which are therein; He made all things in heaven and earth through our Lord Jesus Christ; and all things were created by Him, in Him, and of Him, as has already been demonstrated by many texts.

Part III. On the Terms of Universality

[1] A Rebuttal: Good and Evil Are Not Denoted by "All" and Other Terms of Universality I have resolved to discuss a subject on which our opponents have often vaunted themselves over us, in that they frequently seek to confirm their doctrine by those terms of universality such as "all" (omnia), "all things whatsoever" (universa), and "all things" (cuncta), and other terms which in biblical texts denote the total number of things. They make no distinction at all among substances and insist, moreover, that all substances whatsoever, the evil as well as the good, the transitory as well as the permanent, have been made and created without exception by the just, true, and holy Lord God. With the aid of the true Father I have determined to rebut their doctrine by the testimony of the Scriptures and the soundest of arguments.

[2] On the Terms of Universality. It should, then, be understood that the terms of universality mentioned above, although they may be so called by grammarians, cannot be categorically so designated by men of real wisdom, to wit, that under any term of universality all substances 59. Book of Two Principles (Part III) 545

and actions whatsoever may be neatly comprehended, and indeed even all accidents. Whence, it is obvious that, among the learned, these terms are called universals according to the construction placed upon them in the minds of those using them, but not at all because all things both good and evil may be absolutely and finally summed up under any given term of universality. And this is particularly true inasmuch as good and evil do not harmonize, nor can one come from the other, since they mutually destroy one another and battle in active and continuous opposition.

Because of this, one should realize that the aforesaid terms of universality are used in scriptural texts with several meanings. Now, there are some such terms which refer to those things which are good, clean, made in wisdom, and highly desirable, which persist forever and which obey our Lord God in every use, as is clearly revealed in the Holy Scriptures. On the other hand, there are other terms of universality, which designate those things that are evil, vain, and transitory, and that ought to be cast aside, to be counted but as dung by the faithful of Jesus Christ, that they may gain our Lord Jesus Christ. There are still other terms of universality, which, as one reads, relate to those who, once established under the power of the king of Babylon, were to have been given into the hands of robbers, and were rather to have been laid waste by "a king of a shameless face." These terms also, we believe, were "concluded under [i.e. confined under the power of] sin, that the promise, by the faith of Jesus Christ, might be given to them that believe." They were also confined in unbelief by the true Lord God "that he may have mercy on all" of them. Now, these terms of universality represent those who are to be reconciled, restored, renewed, re-established, fulfilled, and quickened by our Lord God, and by His Son Jesus Christ, as is manifestly dwelt upon by the Scriptures.

[3] On the Terms of Universality Referring to the Good. I wish to expound the soundest interpretation of those terms of universality which I characterized above as referring to what is good, clean, made in wisdom, and the like, using the evidence of Holy Scriptures. For the Apostle says in the first Epistle to Timothy, "For every creature of God is good and nothing to be rejected." And Ecclesiastes says, "He hath made all things good in their time"; and again, "I have learned that all the works which God hath made, continue forever; we cannot add anything, nor take away from those things which God hath made that He may be feared." And it is written in Ecclesiasticus: "O how desirable are all His works! All these things live and remain forever, and for every use all things obey Him." And David says: "How great are Thy works, O Lord? Thou hast made all things in wisdom"; and again, "By Thy ordinance the day goeth on, for all things serve thee." And the Apostle says to the Romans: "All things indeed are clean"; and again, "All things are clean to the clean"; and again, "And we know that to them that love God all things work together unto good," and so on.

In this way it is clearly proved by scriptural evidence that the aforesaid terms of universality designate those things which are most excellent and clean, and which persist forever. Hence, among wise men, it

seems impossible that the good and the evil, the transitory and the permanent, can be wholly summed up absolutely and directly under these terms of universality, as these wise men can very clearly discover.

[4] On the Universal Symbols Which Refer to the Evil. The discussion now turns to the question of those terms of universality which I characterized above as designating those things which are evil, vain, transitory, and which are to be cast aside, and so on. For Ecclesiastes says: "Vanity of vanities and all is vanity"; and again, "I have seen all things that are done under the sun and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." And again: "All things have their season and in their times all things pass under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die." And again: "All things are subject to vanity. And all things go to one place; of earth they were made and into earth they return together." And again, "And therefore I was weary of my life, when I saw that all things under the sun are evil; and all vanity and vexation of spirit." And the Apostle says to the Colossians: "If then you be dead with Christ from the elements of this world, why do you yet decree as though living in the world? Touch not, taste not, handle not, which are all unto destruction by the very use." And to the Philippians the same Apostle says: "If any other thinketh he may have confidence in the flesh, I more; being circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; according to the Law, a Pharisee; according to zeal, persecuting the church of God; according to the justice that is in the Law, conversing without blame. But the things that were gain to me, the same I have counted loss for Christ. Furthermore I count all things to be but loss for the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them but as dung, that I may gain Christ." And in the Gospel of the Blessed Matthew, Christ says to the scribe, "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast"; that is, put away all your material possessions in accordance with the Law. Thence there follows: "Then Peter answering, said to him: 'Behold, we have left all things and have followed Thee; what therefore shall we have?' " In answer, He said, "You have left all things and followed me," and so forth. And the Apostle says to the Colossians, "But now put you also all away: anger, detraction, indignation, malice, blasphemy." And the Blessed John says in his first Epistle: "Love not the world nor the things which are in the world. If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh and the concupiscence of the eyes and the pride of life, which is not of the Father but is of the world," and so on.

Thus, it should be clearly realized that these universal symbols which refer to what is evil, vain, and transitory are not of the same sort as those other universal symbols already mentioned, which designate the good, clean, and highly desirable, and which persist forever. And this is particularly true because they cannot be in harmony nor exist together under any form of universality, because they mutually destroy and oppose one another. Nor is it possible that they can derive entirely from the same cause.

[5] On Those Terms of Universality Designating Those Who for Their Sins Were Established in the Power of the King of Babylon. I now propose to clarify the matter of those terms of universality which were

once established under the power of the king of Babylon, which were to have been given into the hands of robbers, and were rather to have been laid waste by "a king of a shameless face." These terms, also, we believe, apply to all that are to be reconciled, re-established, fulfilled, and quickened by the true Lord God and by His Son Jesus Christ, as is clearly set forth in the Scriptures. For the prophet Daniel says to Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king: "Thou art a king of kings, and the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, and strength, and power, and glory, and all places wherein the children of men and the beasts of the field do dwell; He hath also given the birds of the air into thy hand and hath put all things under thy power." And again: "And after their reign, when iniquities shall be grown up, there shall arise a king of a shameless face and understanding dark sentences. And his power shall be strengthened but not by his own force, and he shall lay all things waste and shall prosper and do more than can be believed. And he shall destroy the mighty, and the people of the saints, according to his will. And craft shall be successful in his hand, and his heart shall be puffed up. And in the abundance of all things he shall kill many; and he shall rise up against the prince of princes." And Job says, "The tabernacles of robbers abound, and they provoke God boldly, whereas it is he that hath given all into their hands." All this you must interpret as caused by the sins of the people, as the already quoted Daniel, referring to the "little horn," says, "And strength was given him against the continual sacrifice, because of sins; and truth shall be cast down on the ground." And Elihu in the Book of Job says, "And upon nations and over all men He maketh a man that is a hypocrite to reign for the sins of the people." And it was in this way that those who are represented by the aforesaid terms of universality, because of their sins, were once, we believe, put under the power of sin and also of unbelief, given into the hands of robbers, and established under the power of the king of Babylon, so that in the last times God may have mercy on all of those who forsake their wickedness. For the Apostle says to the Gala-tians, "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by the faith of Jesus Christ might be given unto them that believe." And the same Apostle says to the Romans, "For God hath concluded all in unbelief, that He may have mercy on us all."

[6] On the Mercy of the Lord Our God. So the Lord our God "for His exceeding charity wherewith He loved us" has had mercy upon us, as the Apostle writes to the Ephesians: "Even when we were dead in sins, [God] hath quickeneth us together in Christ"; and as the same Apostle says to Titus: "Not by the works which we have done but according to His great mercy He saved us, by the laver of regeneration and renovation of the Holy Spirit, whom He hath poured forth upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that, being justified by His grace, we may be heirs according to hope of life everlasting." Whence it is written in the Book of Wisdom: "But Thou, our God, art gracious and true, patient, and ordering all things in mercy." And again: "But Thou hast mercy upon all because Thou canst do all things and over-lookest the sins of men for the sake of repentance. For Thou lovest all things that are and hatest none of the things which Thou hast made, for Thou didst not appoint or make anything hating it. And how could anything endure if Thou wouldst not? or be preserved if not called by Thee? But Thou sparest all because they are Thine, O Lord, who lovest souls." And again: "For it was neither herb nor mollifying plaster that healed them, but Thy word, O Lord, which healeth all things." And David says: "All expect of Thee that Thou give them food in season. What Thou givest to them they shall gather up,

when Thou openest Thy hand they shall all be fulfilled with good." And Christ says in the Gospel of John, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself." Thus, it is clearly discovered through statements of the Scripture that God wishes to have mercy upon all His creatures.

[7] On the Reconciliation of Those Represented by Terms of Universality. It can be clearly found through evidence of Scripture that those to whom the aforesaid terms of universality refer are to be reconciled, restored, re-established, fulfilled, and quickened by the Lord our God and by His Son Jesus Christ. For the Apostle says of our Lord Jesus Christ in his Epistle to the Colossians: "Because in Him it hath well pleased the Father that all fullness of divinity should dwell, and through Him to reconcile all things unto himself, making peace through the blood of His cross, both as to the things that are on earth and the things that are in heaven." And in the Gospel of Matthew, Christ says, "Elijah indeed shall come and restore all things." And the Apostle says to the Ephesians: "That He might make known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Him in the dispensation of the fullness of times, to re-establish all things in Christ that are in heaven and on earth in Him." And it is written in the Apocalypse, "And He that sat on the throne, said, 'Behold, I make all things new.'" And it is of Christ, we believe, that the Apostle says to the Ephesians, "He that descended is the same also that ascended above all the heavens, that He might fill all things." 50 And in his first Epistle to Timothy, the same Apostle says, "I charge thee before God, who quickeneth all things." It is revealed, moreover, that what is represented by the term "all" has been subjected under the feet of Jesus Christ by the true Lord God, as David says and the Apostle points out to the Hebrews: " 'He has subjected all things under His feet.' For in that He hath subjected all things to Him, He left nothing not subject to Him. But now we see not as yet all things subject to Him."

And again, the same Apostle says in the first Epistle to the Corinthians: " 'For He hath put all things under His feet.' And whereas he saith, 'All things are put under Him'; undoubtedly, He is excepted who put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then the Son also himself shall be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

[8] That All Good and Evil Whatsoever Come Not from One and the Same Cause. To wise men, therefore, it is obvious that the good and the evil, the clean and the polluted, the transitory and the permanent, are not summed up under these terms of universality, to wit, "all," "all things whatsoever," and "all things," and others which are found in Holy Scriptures, most particularly because they are complete opposites and contraries. Nor could they all arise entirely from one cause alone. For Jesus son of Sirach says: "Good is set against evil, and life against death, so also is the sinner against a just man. And so look upon all the works of the Most High." And Paul says in the second Epistle to the Corinthians: "For what participation hath justice with injustice? Or what fellowship hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath the faithful with the unbeliever? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" It is as if he were saying: Justice has

absolutely no harmony with injustice, nor light with darkness, nor is there concord between Christ and Belial; which should be understood to mean that these opposites and contraries may not arise from one and the same cause. If it were otherwise—if justice and injustice, light and darkness, Christ and Belial, the faithful and the unbeliever, came absolutely and directly from the Highest Cause of all good—they would be in partnership and in concord, and would not destroy one another in the way that good and evil obviously do every day. For it was clearly pointed out above that, "Good is set against evil, and life against death," and so on.

Hence, it follows that there is another principle, one of evil, who is the source and cause of all wickedness, foulness, and unbelief, as also of all darkness. For otherwise, the true God himself, who is most faithful, and the height of justice, the essence of purity, would be entirely the cause and origin of all evil. All opposites and contraries would emanate entirely from the Lord himself. To suppose this is a most foolish fancy.

Part IV. A Compendium for the Instruction of Beginners

[1] On the Creation of Heaven, the Earth, and the Sea. I have resolved, further, to treat in brief form for the instruction of beginners the subject of the creation of heaven, the earth, and the sea, of which something has already been said. Now, I say that sometimes in the Holy Scriptures the terms "heavens" and "earth" refer not to the mutable and unreasoning elements of this world only, but to intelligent creatures of the true God, those which have comprehension and understanding. For David says: "The heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of his hands." And again, "Hear, O ye heavens, the things I speak; let the earth give ear to the words of my mouth." And Isaiah says, "Hear, O ye heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken." And Jeremiah says: "O earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord." And David, "Thy way is in the sea and Thy paths in many waters." It is to these paths, I believe, that David also refers in the passage "All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth."

Thus, by the terms "heaven," "earth," and "sea" a spiritual existence is implied, as the Blessed John says in the Apocalypse: "And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard all saying, 'To Him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb, benediction and honor and glory and power, forever and ever.'" Thus, David says: "I believe. to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living"; and again, "Thy good spirit shall

lead me into the right land." And David says, "But the just shall inherit the land and shall dwell therein forever-more." And Christ commanded "not to swear by heaven, for it is the throne of God," of which, indeed, David says, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever"--"nor by earth, for it is His footstool," the Lord added. It is of this footstool that David is believed to have written, "Fear ye the Lord our God, and adore His footstool, for it is holy." "

I grant that the Lord our God is the creator and maker of this creation, but not of the "weak and needy elements" of this world, to which the Apostle, for example, refers in saying to the Galatians, "How turn you again to the weak and needy elements, which you desire to serve again?" And to the Colossians the same Apostle says: "If then you be dead with Christ from the elements of this world, why do you yet decree as though living in the world? Touch not, taste not, handle not, which are all unto destruction by the very use." Therefore, it can by no means be conceded that the Lord our God is creator or maker of death, or of those things which are wholly in death, as is written in the Book of Wisdom, "For God made not death, neither hath He pleasure in the destruction of the living." So undoubtedly there is another creator or maker, who is the source and cause of death and perdition, as of all evil, just as we pointed out with sufficient clarity above.

[2] On the Omnipotence of the True Lord God. Now it is my intention to discuss the omnipotence of the true Lord God, a subject on which our opponents have often vaunted themselves over us, saying that there is no power or potency other than His.

Although the true Lord God may be called almighty by the testimony of Holy Scriptures, it is, however, not to be believed that He ought to be called omnipotent in the sense that He can and does do all evils, since there are many evil things which the true God cannot and never will be able to do. For the Apostle says to the Hebrews, "It is impossible for God to lie." And in the second Epistle to Timothy, the same Apostle says, "If we believe not, He continueth faithful, He cannot deny himself." Nor should one believe that the good God can utterly destroy himself or, contrary to all reason and justice, do absolutely all evil things, this especially because He is not the absolute cause of that evil.

But our opponents may rejoin: On the contrary, we can indeed assert that the true Lord God is almighty, in that He can and does do all good things, and also in that He can do all evil things; he can even lie and destroy Himself if He wishes, but He does not choose to do so.

[3] That God Cannot Be the Author of Evil. The reply is obvious. For if God does not desire all evil things, nor to lie, nor to destroy Himself, there is no doubt that He cannot do so, because that which

God most certainly does not desire He cannot do, and what He absolutely cannot do He does not desire. From this it is clear that in the true Lord God there exists no potency for sinning or for doing all evil things. The argument for this is as follows: Since anything predicated of God is indeed God himself, especially because, in the view of wise men. He is not composite nor are there in Him any accidents; it thus follows that God himself and His will are one and the same thing. Therefore the good God cannot lie or be the author of all evils unless He so desires, because what He himself does not desire the true God cannot do, for He and His will are one and the same, as was said above.

[4] That God Cannot Make Another God. Now, with reason and without fear I can say further that the true God himself, with all His powers, could not, cannot, and never will be able in any manner, either intentionally or unintentionally, to make another god and lord and creator, like and coequal unto himself in all things. This I prove.

I say, indeed, that it is impossible for the good God to make another god like unto himself in all things, that is to say, eternal and everlasting, creator and maker of all things that are good, with neither beginning nor end, one who was never made, created, or born of anyone in the sense that the good God was not made, created, or born of anyone. Yet in Holy Scriptures the true Lord God is not called impotent, because of this. Hence it must firmly be believed that the reason the good God is called omnipotent is not that He can make, has made, or shall make all the evils which are, were, and shall be made hereafter, but because He is omnipotent over all things which were, are, and shall be good; and this particularly because He is wholly the cause and origin of all good, but is in no way, of himself exclusively and essentially, the cause of any evil. It follows, therefore, that among wise men the true God is called omnipotent in respect of all things that He has done, does, and shall do in the future; but among those who understand correctly He is not called omnipotent in the sense that He can do what He has not done, does not do, and never will do. And if our opponents say that He has no desire to do so, the argument carries no weight against me, because He and His will are one and the same, as was demonstrated above.

[5] That God Is Not Mighty in Evil, but That There Is Another and Evil Potency. Therefore, it is firmly to be believed that because there exists in God no potency for evil by which He might bring evil things into existence, there is another principle, one of evil, who is potent in evil. From that one flow all evils which were, are, and shall be." It is evidently of him that David says: "Why doest thou glory in malice, thou that art mighty in iniquity? All the day long thy tongue hath devised Injustice; as a sharp razor thou hast wrought deceit. Thou hast loved malice more than goodness, and iniquity rather than to speak righteousness." And the Blessed John says in the Apocalypse, "And that great dragon was cast out, that old serpent who is called the devil and Satan, who seduceth the whole world." And Christ says in the Gospel of Luke: "The seed is the word of God. And they by the wayside are they that hear; then the devil cometh and taketh the word out of their heart, lest believing they should be saved." And the prophet

Daniel says: "I beheld, and lo, that horn made war against the saints and prevailed over them, till the Ancient of Days came and gave judgment to the saints of the Most High," and so on. And again: "And another shall rise up after them; and he shall be mightier than the former, and he shall bring down three kings. And he shall speak words against the High One, and shall crush the saints of the Most High, and he shall think himself able to change times and laws." And again: "And it [the little horn] became great against the south, and against the east, and against the strength. And it was magnified even unto the strength of heaven; and it threw down of the strength, and of the stars, and trod upon them. And it was magnified even to the prince of the strength; and it took away from him the continual sacrifice, and cast down the place of his sanctuary." And the Blessed John says in the Apocalypse: "And there was seen another sign in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads, and ten horns, and on his head seven diadems, and his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth." And again: "And power was given to him to do two and forty months; and he opened his mouth unto blasphemies against God, to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them." So, in the view of wise men, it is deemed wholly impossible that from the true Lord God derive absolutely and directly this mighty one and his potency or power, he who daily works in the most evil fashion against God and His creation, against whom the Lord our God seeks mightily to contend. This the true God could not do if that one, in all his characteristics, were entirely from Him, as most of our opponents declare.

[6] On the Destruction of the One Mighty in Iniquity. It is most clearly found in the Holy Scriptures, moreover, that the true Lord God is about to destroy, together with all his powers," this mighty one who daily strives against God and His creation. For David says of him who is mighty in iniquity: "Therefore will God destroy thee forever; he will pluck thee out and remove thee from thy dwelling place, and thy root out of the land of the living." And David, invoking his God against this mighty one, as we believe, says: "Break thou the arm of the and of the malignant; his sin shall be sought and shall not be found. The Lord shall reign to eternity, yea, forever and ever." And again, "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; and thou shalt seek his place and shalt not find it." And in the Proverbs of Solomon is written, "The wicked man shall be driven out in his wickedness." And the Apostle, referring to the destruction of this mighty one by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, says in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "That, through death, he might destroy him who had the empire of death, that is to say, the devil." And so, the Lord our God not only seeks to destroy this mighty one but also all the powers and dominations which sometimes seem through this mighty one to rule over the creatures of the good Lord when they are subjected to this evil dominion So speaks the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Gospel according to Luke, "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble." And the Apostle says in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, "Afterward the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God and the Father, when he shall have brought to nought all principality, and power, and virtue, and domination and the enemy of all, death, shall be destroyed last." " And the same Apostle says to the Colossians: "Giving thanks to God the Father, who hath made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light of truth, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love." And again: "And you, when you were dead in your sins and the

uncircumcision of your flesh, He hath quickened together with Him, forgiving you all offenses, blotting out the handwriting of the decree that was against us, which was contrary to us. And he hath taken the same out of the way, fastening it to the Cross; and despoiling the principalities and powers, he hath exposed them confidently in open show, triumphing over them in himself."

Thus the Blessed Paul was sent by the Lord Jesus Christ to despoil the power referred to, as is written of him in the Acts of the Apostles: "For to this end have I appeared to thee, that I may make thee a minister and a witness of those things which thou hast seen and of those things wherein I will appear to thee, delivering thee from the people and from the nations, unto which now I send thee, to open their eyes that they may be converted from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a lot among the saints by the faith that is in me." And Christ, In the Gospel of the Blessed Matthew, says: "You are come out as it were to a robber, with swords and clubs to apprehend me. I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you laid not hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness." " Whence one must firmly believe. that the power of Satan and of darkness cannot be absolutely and directly from the true Lord God. Otherwise, if, as the unlearned say, the power of Satan and of darkness in all its manifestations were absolutely and directly from the true Lord God, along with other powers, and all virtues and dominations, Paul and the other faithful of Jesus Christ could in no way have been snatched from the power of darkness. And also there would have been no way by which anyone could have been converted from the power of Satan to the true Lord God. This is particularly true because, if all powers, virtues, and dominations were derived exclusively and essentially from the good God, anyone who is extricated from the power of Satan and of darkness would be released from the exclusive and essential power of the true Lord God himself. Nor could the Lord himself despoil and bring to nought any power other than His own, if no other power whatsoever is to be found, as say all the opponents of those true Christians who are rightly known by the name of Albanenses."

[7] On the Evil Principle. For this reason, in the opinion of the wise it is firmly to be believed that there is another principle, one of evil, who is mighty in iniquity, from whom the power of Satan and of darkness and all other powers which are inimical to the true Lord God are exclusively and essentially derived, as was demonstrated above and will appear below, God willing. Otherwise, it would seem obvious to these same [wise] persons that this Divine Might struggles, destroys, and wars against itself. For the Apostle says to the Ephesians: "Finally, brethren, be strengthened in the Lord and in the might of His power. Put you on the armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places. Therefore take unto you the armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and to stand in all things perfect," and so on; "in all things taking the shield of faith, wherewith you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one." Thus, the virtues and the powers of the true Lord God by His will would daily be in opposition to one another, were there no other might but His. It is utter foolishness to

believe this of the true God. Therefore, it follows indubitably that there is a might or power other than the true one, which the true Lord God daily seeks to assail, as was most clearly demonstrated to the wise " in the foregoing.

[8] On the Strange God and Many Gods. Now, if anyone should be so foolish as to spurn the most valid arguments set forth above, let him fully realize that through the evidence of the Holy Scriptures it may clearly be learned that there is another god, a lord and prince other than the true Lord God. For the Lord says through Jeremiah, "As you have forsaken me and served a strange god in your own land, so shall you serve strange gods in a land that is not your own." And [through Isaiah], "Assemble yourselves and come, and draw near together, ye that are saved of the Gentiles! They have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven work, and pray to a god that cannot save." And again, "O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us, only in Thee let us remember Thy name." And David says: "Hear, O my people, and I will testify to thee! O Israel, if thou wilt hearken to me! there shall be no new god in thee; neither shalt thou adore a strange god." And again, "If we have forgotten the name of our God, and if we have spread forth our hands to a strange god, shall not God search out these things?" And again: "The princes of the people are gathered together with the God of Abraham; for the strong gods of the earth are exceedingly exalted." And again, "For all the gods of the Gentiles are devils." And Zephaniah says, "The Lord shall be terrible upon them and shall consume all the gods of the earth." And Jeremiah says: "A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem so these likewise have gone after strange gods, to serve them and adore them." And again: "Because your fathers forsook me and went after strange gods and served them and adored them, and they forsook me and kept not my law; and you also have done worse than your fathers, for behold, every one of you walketh after the perverseness of his evil heart, so as not to hearken to me. So I will cast you forth out of this land into a land which you know not, nor your fathers; and there you shall serve strange gods day and night, which shall not give you any rest." And Malachi says: "Judah hath transgressed, and abomination hath been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem, for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the Lord, which He loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god." And Micah says: "For all people will walk away every one in the name of his god, but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever." And the Apostle says in the second Epistle to the Corinthians: "And if our gospel be also hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of unbelievers, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not shine unto them." 1 And the same Apostle says in the first Epistle to the Corinthians: "For although there be that are called gods, either in heaven or on earth (for there be gods many, and lords many), yet to us there is but one God." And Christ says in the Gospel of Matthew: "No man can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will sustain the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." And again, in the Gospel of John, Christ says: "For the prince of this world cometh and in me he hath not anything"; and again, "Now is the judgment of the world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out"; and again, "Because the prince of this world is already judged." And the apostles say in their Acts: "Why did the Gentiles rage, and the people meditate vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes assembled together against the Lord and his

Christ.' For of a truth there assembled together in this city against Thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel," and so on. So it is clearly seen that through the evidence of the Holy Scriptures many gods, lords, and princes in enmity to the true Lord God and His son Jesus Christ can manifestly be discovered, as has just been plainly set forth.

[9] That an Evil Eternity May Also Be Discerned. That for these gods an eternity, a sempiternity, and an antiquity may be discerned different and distinct from that of the true Lord God we can clearly prove through the Scriptures. Christ says in the Gospel of Matthew, "Then shall the king say to them that shall be on his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels.' " And the Blessed Jude [brother of] James: "And the angels who kept not their principality but forsook their own habitation He hath reserved under darkness in everlasting chains unto the judgment of the great day"; and again, "As Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighboring cities in like manner, having given themselves to fornication and going after other flesh, were made an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire." And the Blessed Job says, "Where the shadow of death, and no order, but everlasting horror dwelleth." And through Ezechiel, the Lord says of Mount Seir: "I will make thee everlasting desolations"; and again, "Behold, I come against thee, Mount Seir, and I will stretch forth my hand upon thee, and I will make thee desolate and waste. I will destroy thy cities, and thou shalt be desolate; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord. Because thou hast been an everlasting enemy, and hast shut up the children of Israel in the hands of the sword in the time of their affliction, in the time of their last iniquity." This [Mount Seir] is a symbol for the devil, who is the enemy of the true God, as Christ pointed out in the Gospel of Matthew." And the Apostle says in the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, "Who also shall suffer eternal punishment in destruction." And Christ says in the Gospel of Matthew, "And these shall go into everlasting punishment." And in the Gospel of the Blessed Mark, He says, "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit shall never have forgiveness, but shall be guilty of an everlasting sin."

Habakkuk the prophet, referring to the eternity of the devil, says: "God will come from the south, and the holy one from Mount Pharan. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise. His brightness shall be as the light, horns are in his hands; there is his strength hid. Death shall go before his face, and the devil shall go forth before his feet. He stood and measured the earth; he beheld and melted the nations; and the ancient mountains were crushed to pieces. The hills of the world were bowed down by the journeys of his eternity."

Moreover, regarding the antiquity of the devil it is written in the Apocalypse, "And that great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, who is called the devil and Satan." Whence, if it be fully understood that the essences of things have neither beginning nor end by reason of their eternity, sempiternity, or antiquity (just as, for example, it is evident to anyone is true in the case of the good God), it has, then,

been clearly demonstrated in the foregoing that sin, penalties, desolations, error, fire, punishment, chains, and the devil have neither beginning nor end. They are the names either of the chief principle of evil or of his effects. They are evidences of one evil cause, eternal or everlasting or ancient, because if the effect has been eternal or everlasting, it necessarily follows that the cause was the same. There is, then, without doubt, a principle of evil from which this eternity or sempiternity and antiquity are exclusively and essentially derived.

[10] That There Is Another Creator or Maker. That there is, in addition to the faithful Creator to whom they that suffer "commended their souls in good deeds," another god and lord who is a creator and maker, I propose to prove clearly from the Scriptures, chiefly from the Old Testament, in accord with the trust which our opponents place in it. For they openly assert the Lord to be the creator and maker who created and made the visible things of this world, namely heaven and earth, the sea, men and beasts, birds and all creeping things, as we read in Genesis: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth. And the earth was void and empty." And again: "And God created the great whales, and every living and moving creature and every winged fowl according to its kind." And again, "And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds, and cattle, and everything that creepeth after its kind." And again, "And God created man to His own image; to the image of God he created him; male and female he made them." And Christ says in the Gospel of the Blessed Mark, "But from the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female."

Now it must be kept in mind that no one can point to the temporal and visible existence of the evil god in this world, nor, indeed, to that of the good God. But a cause is known by its effects. From this, it should be understood that no one can prove him to be an evil god or a creator, except by the fact of his evil works or his fickle words. But I say that he who created and made the visible things of this world is not the true Creator. This I intend to prove by the fact of his evil works and his fickle words, assuming to be true what our opponents most openly affirm, that the works and words which are recorded in the Old Testament were actually produced, visibly and materially, in this world."

For heartily we detest these works, namely adultery, theft of another's property, murder, blasphemy, concurring in falsehood, giving one's word either with or without an oath and never keeping it. All these evil things enumerated were done by the god or creator discussed above, visibly and materially, in this temporal world, according to that interpretation which our opponents put on the Old Testament. They believe that these scriptures speak of the creation and production of this world and of the works which are openly and actually seen on this earth. This also those persons who believe there is only one First Principle are of necessity forced to admit. These things I propose clearly to prove by those scriptures to which our opponents give great credence.

[11] That the Evil God Brought About Fornication. Now, this lord and creator commanded in Deuteronomy: "If a man shall lie with another man's wife, they shall both die, that is to say, the adulterer and the adulteress, and thou shalt take away the evil out of Israel"; and again, "No man shall take [his] father's wife nor remove his covering." And in Leviticus, the Lord again says: "Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's wife, for it is the nakedness of thy father"; and again, "If a man lie with his stepmother and discover the nakedness of his father, let them both be put to death."

But contrary to the above-mentioned precept, it is obvious that this lord and creator caused this adultery to be committed openly and carnally in this temporal world, according to the belief and the interpretation of our opponents, as will be found most clearly expressed in the second Book of Kings, read according to their belief, for there this lord and creator says to David through the prophet Nathan: "Why therefore has thou despised the word of the Lord, to do evil in my sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. Thus saith the Lord, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thy own house, and I will take thy wives before thy eyes and give them to thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly; but I will do this thing in the sight of all Israel.' " Thus, according to the belief of our opponents, either this lord and creator was a liar, or without doubt he actually brought about this adultery, as he is clearly found to have done, according to their interpretation, in the second Book of Kings: "And Ahithophel said to Absalom: 'Go in to the concubines of thy father, whom he hath left to keep the house; that when all Israel shall hear that thou hast disgraced thy father their hands may be strengthened with thee.' So they spread a tent for Absalom on the top of the house; and he went into his father's concubines before all Israel." So, as he had threatened, this lord and creator, according to our opponents' interpretation, consummated that deed of adultery temporally and visibly in this world, and also contrary to his own commandment as cited above, "If a man shall lie with another man's wife," and so on.

No wise man, therefore, assumes that the true Creator was he who actually gave a man's wives to his son or to any other man for purposes of fornication, as that creator who, according to the belief of the ignorant made the visible things of this world is believed to have done, as is clearly shown in the foregoing. Wherefore it should be realized that the Lord our God, the true Creator, never decreed that adultery or fornication should actually be committed in this world. For the Apostle says, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, "Do not err; neither fornicators nor adulterers shall possess the kingdom of God." And the same Apostle says to the Ephesians, "For know you this and understand, that no fornicator or unclean person hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." And he says to the Thessalonians, "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from fornication." Our true Creator, therefore, did not in this temporal world take the wives of David, nor give them to his neighbor to lie with in the sight of all Israel and in the sight of the sun, as was set forth above. But there

is, without doubt, an evil creator, who is the source and cause of all the fornication and adultery of this World, as has been proven above and will appear below, God willing.

[12] That the Evil God Caused the Goods of Others to Be Plundered by Force, and Murder to be Committed. We can, moreover, clearly prove through the Old Testament, if we accept the belief of our opponents, that the aforesaid lord and creator caused the goods of others to be plundered by force and caused the actual theft—under the guise of a loan—of the wealth of the Egyptians and even caused most bloody murders. For this very lord says to Moses in Exodus: "Therefore thou shalt tell all the people that every man ask of his friend, and every woman of her neighbor, vessels of silver, and of gold. And the Lord will give favor to his people in the sight of the Egyptians." And again: "And the children of Israel did as Moses had commanded; and they asked of the Egyptians vessels of silver and gold, and very much raiment; and the Lord gave favor to the people in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them; and they stripped the Egyptians." 1" And in Deuteronomy, Moses says to the people: "If at any time thou come to fight against a city, thou shalt first offer it peace. If they receive it and open the gates to thee, all the people that are therein shall be saved and shall serve thee paying tribute. But if they will not make peace, and shall begin war against thee, thou shalt besiege it. And when the Lord thy God shall deliver it into thy hands, thou shalt slay all that are therein of the male sex, with the edge of the sword, excepting women and children, cattle, and other things that are in the city. And thou shalt divide all the prey to the army; and thou shalt eat the spoils of thy enemies, which the Lord thy God shall give thee. So shalt thou do to all cities that are at great distance from thee and are not of these cities which thou shalt receive in possession. But of those cities that shall be given thee, thou shalt suffer none at all to live, but shalt kill them with the edge of the sword, to wit, the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Canaanite, the Perizzite, and the Jebusite, and the Hivite as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee." And again in the same book: "And Sihon came out to meet us with all his people to fight at Jahaz. And the Lord our God delivered him to us; and we slew him with his sons and all his people. And we took all his cities at that time, killing the inhabitants of them, men and women and children; we left nothing of them." And again: "So the Lord our God delivered into our hands Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people; and we utterly destroyed them, wasting all his cities at one time. There was not a town that escaped us; sixty cities, all the country of Argob the kingdom of Og in Bashan," and so on. "And we utterly destroyed them, as we had done to Sihon the king of Heshbon, destroying every city, men and women and children. But the cattle and the spoils of the cities we took for our prey.

Regarding the man gathering sticks on the Sabbath it is written in the Book of Numbers: "And it came to pass, when the children of Israel were in the wilderness and had found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day, that they brought him to Moses and Aaron and the whole multitude. And they put him into prison, not knowing what they should do with him. And the Lord said to Moses, 'Let that man die; let all the multitude stone him without the camp.' " And again this lord says in Exodus to the people of Israel: "I will fill the number of thy days. I will send my fear before thee, and will destroy all the people to whom ;thou shalt come, and will turn the backs of all thy enemies." And in Leviticus the same lord

says: "You shall pursue your enemies, and they shall fall before you. Five of yours shall pursue a hundred others, and a hundred of you ten thousand; your enemies shall fall before you by the sword." And he says in the Book of Numbers: "But if you will not kill the inhabitants of the land, they that remain shall be as nails in your eyes and spears in your sides, and they shall be your adversaries in the land of your habitation. And whatsoever I had thought to do to them, I will do to you."

[13] On the Evil Creator. And so, in the opinion of the wise it is quite evident that he cannot be a true creator who, in the temporal world, caused the manifest and merciless destruction of so many men and women with all their children. For it does seem incredible that in the case of the children—since they had not the knowledge rightly to distinguish good from evil, nor the free will, according to the belief of our opponents—the true Creator could in this temporal world have destroyed them pitilessly by a most revolting death; especially when the Lord had said through Ezechiel, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, but the soul that sinneth, the same shall die." Nor does Jesus Christ, faithful Son of our Creator, enjoin his followers to visit utter destruction upon their enemies in this temporal world, but commands rather that they do good unto them. Thus, He says in the Gospel of the Blessed Matthew: "You have heard that it hath been said to them of old, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy.' But I say to you, 'Love your enemies.' " He did not say: In this temporal world, persecute your enemies as your Father did of old; but said, "Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you, that you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven." It is as though He were saying: that you may be in the love of your Father who is in heaven, to whom belongs this work of mercy. Hence, the Son of God, Jesus Christ himself, was taught by His Father to do this work of mercy in the present, just as He says of himself in the Gospel of John, "The Son cannot do anything of himself, but what he seeth his Father doing; for what things so ever he doth, these the Son also doth in like manner." Therefore, it is evident that the Father of Jesus Christ did not cause the manifest destruction of so many men and women with all their children in this temporal world; particularly since this very God is the "Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort," as the Apostle points out to the Corinthians.

[14] That the Evil God Cursed Christ. Moreover, not only did the lord and creator whom we are discussing command that the aforesaid murder be committed in this temporal world, if we accept the belief of our opponents, but he cursed our Lord Jesus Christ, as is recorded in Deuteronomy: "When a man hath committed a crime and is to be punished with death and, being condemned to die, is hanged on a gibbet, his body shall not remain upon the tree, but shall be buried the same day, for he is accursed of God that hangeth on a tree." And the Apostle says to the Galatians: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.' " Whence, in the opinion of the wise, it is not at all to be believed that the Most Benevolent God, entirely of himself and not at all under the influence of His enemy, cursed His son Jesus Christ—or, rather, cursed himself, if it is true that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one and the same, as

the uninformed say. But there is indubitably an evil creator, who is the source and cause of the malediction on Jesus Christ as, indeed, he is of all evil.

[15] How That [Evil] God Concurred in Falsehood. Now, according to our opponents, the same lord and creator is found to have concurred in falsehood by sending a very evil and lying spirit. Indeed, the spirit of this god is called an "evil spirit" and a "wicked spirit," as is recorded in the first Book of Kings: "But the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him"; and again, in the same book, "So whensoever the evil spirit of God was upon Saul, David took his harp and played with his hand, and Saul was refreshed and was better, for the evil spirit departed from him." And in the Book of Judges it is written: "So Abimelech reigned over Israel for three years. And the Lord God sent a very evil spirit between Abimelech and the inhabitants of Shechem."° But the Lord our God sent the spirit of truth, as Christ declares in the Gospel.

And in the third Book of Kings, Micaiah the prophet says: "I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the army of heaven standing by him on the right hand and on the left. And the Lord said, 'Who shall deceive Ahab, king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead?' And one spoke words of this manner, and another otherwise. And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord and said, 'I will deceive him.' And the Lord said to him, 'By what means?' And he said, 'I will go forth and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And the Lord said, 'Thou shalt deceive him, and shalt prevail; go forth and do so.' Now therefore behold the Lord hath given a lying spirit in the mouth of all thy prophets that are here; and the Lord hath spoken evil against thee." And so, once more it is clearly seen, if we follow our opponents, that he, lord and creator, sent a very evil and a lying spirit. This the true God absolutely could not do in any fashion.

[15] That the Evil God Did Not Keep His Promise. This very lord and creator, moreover, promised to Abraham, and confirmed to his seed, that he would give to him and to his seed after him all the land which Abraham saw to the north and to the south, to the east and to the west, as one reads in Genesis: "And the Lord said to Abraham, after Lot was separated from him, 'Lift up thy eyes, and look from the place wherein thou now art, to the north and to the south, to the east and to the west. All the land which thou seest I will give to thee and to thy seed forever.' " And again: "Arise, walk through the land in the length, and in the breadth thereof, for I will give it to thee." And in Deuteronomy it is written: "Go in and possess the land concerning which the Lord God swore to our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that he would give it to them and to their seed after them."

[16] But although this very lord made the promise aforesaid under oath to Abraham, yet it must be believed that in a temporal sense he never fulfilled it at all. This is what the Blessed Stephen says in the

Acts of the Apostles: "For he, the Lord, said to Abraham, 'Go forth out of thy country and from thy kindred and come into the land which I shall show thee.' Then he went out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charan. And from thence, after his father was dead, he removed him into this land wherein you now dwell. And he gave him no inheritance in it, no, not the pace of a foot, but he promised to give it him in possession and to his seed after him." And so, it is clearly seen that he, the lord and creator, failed to fulfill a promise made under oath; nor did he ever, even according to the views of our opponents, fulfill it in the temporal and visible world. Moreover, it does not appear that Abraham in a temporal sense possessed this land at any time, whatever the unlearned may stammer about it.

[17] How This God Was Actually Seen in This Temporal World. It appears, also, in accordance with the belief of the dullards, that the aforesaid lord and creator was plainly seen in this world, by several persons face to face. So we read in Genesis, "And Jacob called the name of the place Penuel, saying, 'I have seen the Lord face to face.' " And in Exodus it is written: "Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abiu, and seventy of the ancients of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel"; and again, "And the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man is wont to speak to his friend." And in the Book of Numbers this lord says, "But it is not so with my servant Moses who is most faithful in all my house, for I speak to him mouth to mouth and plainly and not by riddles and figures." But our true Creator is never seen by anyone with the corporeal eyes of this world, as the Blessed John says in the Gospel, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." And the Apostle says in the first Epistle to Timothy, "To the king of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory." And to the Colossians the same Apostle says, referring to Christ, "Who is the image of the invisible God."

Therefore, the wise may read [the Scriptures] and believe without doubt that there is an evil god, lord and creator; he is the source and cause of all the evils referred to above. Otherwise, one would be led of necessity to confess that the true God himself, who is shining and good, holy, the living fountain and source of all sweetness, delight, and justice, was directly the cause and origin of all evil, wickedness, bitterness, and injustice. All opposites and contraries would flow forth entirely from the Lord himself. In the opinion of the wise, such a supposition is a most foolish fancy.

Part V. Against the Garatenses

[1] Rebuttal of the Garatenses. I I have decided to write a further rebuttal of the Garatenses, who often have repeated a boasting challenge to us by saying: You Albanenses cannot prove by evidence from the Holy Scriptures that an evil god is the creator of heaven and earth and all other visible things, which repeatedly you proclaim him to be. I am led to reply briefly to them . . . but it is known, however, that great hostility repeatedly appears between Saracens, the baptized, Jews, Tatars, and other religiously minded persons of this world. Although all believe that there is only one Principle, holy, good, and merciful, they are nonetheless found in constant contention with each other with their harsh words and the cruelest of deeds—even though all undoubtedly believe that in creation all men are brothers. I have already refuted this most foolish belief of theirs with clarity sufficient for the wise.

[2] Exposure of the Foolish. Now, however, I wish to expose to those who do have understanding the folly of the Garatenses; they, like the others, believe in only one most benevolent Creator, and yet are wont repeatedly to assert that there is another lord, the evil prince of this world, who was a creature of the most excellent Creator. He, they say, corrupted the four elements of the true Lord God. Out of these elements this evil lord in the beginning formed and made man and woman and all the other visible bodies of this world, from which have sprung all other bodies whatsoever which today prevail on earth.

But since this opinion of theirs seems most foolish to the learned, I demand that they confirm their interpretation by evidence from Holy Scriptures, by stating where—in what book, in what text, or in what part of the Bible—one may find that which they believe and openly preach to men, namely, that an evil god or lord corrupted the four elements of the good Lord God and that an evil lord in the beginning made man and woman and all other bodies whatsoever, those of birds, of fishes, of creeping things, and of cattle of this world, as they preach and attest before men.

But perchance they may say: We can indeed prove that an evil god in the beginning made man and woman and all other beings whatsoever from which all carnal bodies are derived. For as one clearly finds in Genesis, he, the evil lord, says to man and woman, to the birds, cattle, and all the other carnal bodies: "Increase and multiply and fill the earth." He says to the fishes: "Increase and multiply and fill the waters of the sea." In that book also, one finds that this god, whom we believe to be evil, says: "Let us make man to our image and likeness"; and again, "And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds, and cattle and everything that creepeth after its kind"; and again, "And the Lord God built the rib which he took from Adam into a woman."° And again, He said: "Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh." " And Christ says in the Gospel of the Blessed Mark: "But from the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female." And he adds, "For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be in one flesh. Therefore now they are not two, but one flesh," and so on. And it is in such wise, perhaps relying on the foregoing texts and others like them, that they may allege that an evil god in the beginning made the visible bodies of this world.

I will accept their allegation, so far as I am able, provided they believe the foregoing evidence to be completely true. But let them tell me whether or not they really believe and wish to accept the foregoing evidence and other words which are recorded in the Book of Genesis. If they say they do not, because the evil god is the author and no faith at all is to be put in his words, I answer that denial: Therefore, you have produced no proof from Scripture to substantiate doctrine such as you daily preach. Therefore, how, by what boldness, can you utter such words if you can provide no argument from Holy Scripture to buttress your opinion?

But suppose they say: Although we believe this god to be evil, nonetheless we accept as true this evidence which we have advanced just as it is recorded in Genesis, to wit, that he, the evil god, made the visible bodies of this world, as was pointed out in the foregoing. To them I reply: If you seek to confirm from the Book of Genesis doctrine such as you preach daily—namely, that an evil god corrupted the four elements and in the beginning made man and woman and all fleshly bodies—then why do you daily contend with us, saying that we cannot prove to you one evil creator god? Can we not plainly prove to you, through the texts from Genesis with which you buttress your opinion, that this god, whom you believe to be evil, is the creator of heaven, earth, and all other things which are visible, just as he is their maker? For in Genesis, one reads: "In the beginning God created heaven, and earth. And the earth was void and empty"; and again, "And God created the great whales, and every living and moving creature"; and so on, "and every winged fowl according to its kind." And again: "And God created man to his own image, to the image of God he created him, male and female he created them"; and again, "And he blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." And again, "But Melchizedek, the king of Salem, bringing forth bread and wine, for he was the priest of the most high God, blessed him and said, 'Blessed be Abram by the most high God, who created heaven and earth. And blessed be the most high God by whose protection the enemies are in thy hands.' "

And so by testimony from Genesis, in accordance with the demonstration which we have presented for the Garatenses, we can plainly prove the existence of an evil creator, who created heaven, earth, and all other visible bodies whatsoever, exactly as has already been pointed out with respect to the evil "maker" by evidence from Genesis.

[3] On All Creation. But perhaps some imprudent person among them will say: We do, indeed, believe in only one Creator and Maker of all, who created and made all visible and invisible things, just as is written in the Gospel of the Blessed John: "All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made." And Paul says in the Acts of the Apostles: "That I preach to you: God, who made the world, and all things therein," and so on, "and hath made of one all mankind to dwell upon the whole face of the

earth." In the same book the apostles said: "Lord, Thou art He that didst make heaven and earth, the sea, and all things that are in them." And in the Apocalypse is written: "Fear the Lord and give Him honor, and adore ye Him that made heaven and earth, the sea, and the fountain of waters." And the Apostle says to the Hebrews: "He that created all things is God." And so, perhaps, by these passages and others like them might they attest one sole Creator and Maker of all.

Against this I object as follows: If, indeed, the true Lord God in the beginning made male and female, fowls and cattle, and all the other visible bodies, why then, do you daily censure the carnal union of man and woman, calling it the work of the devil? Why do you not produce sons and daughters for your Lord God? Why do you not eat the meat, the eggs, and the cheese which are from your Creator, most good? And wherefore do you utterly condemn eating them, if you believe that there is only one Creator and Maker of all visible things? It is not surprising that the Romans constantly cite against you the text of the Blessed Paul, who says to Timothy: "Now the Spirit manifestly saith, that in the last times some shall depart the faith, giving heed to spirits of error, and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, and having their conscience seared, forbidding to marry, [enjoining] to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving by the faithful, and by them that have known the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be rejected." Now if it be true that the most benevolent and merciful God created and made man and woman and the visible bodies of the world, you repeatedly scorn the creation of the true Lord God when you condemn His matrimony.

The Garatenses are thus ensnared by their own words.

[4] A Declaration to the Faithful. Let it be spread abroad to all the faithful in Christ that, because of the slanderous statements of a certain member of the Garatenses who boasted excessively in the presence of our friends, I have been moved to write against him—as by Satan the Lord was moved when He said in the Book of Job: "Thou hast moved me against him," and so on—although I have not troubled myself to do this previously. But by the aid of Jesus Christ, I may say with the prophet: "His sorrow shall be turned on his own head: and his iniquity shall come down upon his crown." Now, however, I serve notice upon you Alb . . . and the whole group of your Garatenses that if using the whole text of the Bible you wish to uphold and defend your faith, that which you hold and preach every day before your believers—which is that the devil corrupted the four elements of the true Lord God, to wit, heaven, earth, water, and fire; that he in the beginning made man and woman and the other visible bodies of this world—I intend to uphold and defend my faith, which I hold and openly preach before Christ's faithful, by testimony of the Law, the prophets, and the New Testament, which I believe to be true and to declare the truth, namely, that there is an evil god who created heaven and earth, the great whales, and every living and moving creature, and every winged fowl according to its kind, and made man and woman; who formed man of the slime of the earth, and breathed into him the breath of life—things which this god has done, as I have clearly read in the Book of Genesis." If you desire to meet this

challenge, choose any place which seems to you appropriate and convenient, in the full knowledge that I, as I have already made clear, am prepared with the aid of the true Father to sustain my position.

[5] A Challenge. Again, I wish you to know, Al . . . , that I have been informed by Peter of Ferrara" of your admission to him that you are unable to establish through the text of the New Testament this belief of yours to the effect that the devil corrupted the four elements of the good God and that he made male and female, or words to this effect. Whence I say this to you and to all your Garatenses: If you wish to confess this in the presence of our faithful followers and friends, to wit, that you cannot prove the truth of your faith by texts which you believe to be valid and to declare the truth; if, as is reported, you wish to confess this, know you that I elect to uphold my faith and to prove it by the Holy Scriptures and by texts which I believe to declare the truth. My position is that this god, whom I believe to be evil, created heaven and earth and the other things enumerated above. If you are unwilling to admit this, defend, then, your faith, which you so assiduously preach, by texts which you believe to be true and to declare the truth, just as I stand ready to defend my faith. If, indeed, you do not wish to do this, it is truly most astonishing that you ask men to accept your belief, which is that the devil corrupted the four elements of the true Lord God, out of which in the beginning he made the visible bodies of this world. It is astonishing, moreover, that you cannot produce solid proof by texts which you believe to be valid and to declare the truth, yet you choose to reject my most benevolent faith, which I am prepared to buttress strongly by evidence from the Law, the prophets, and from the New Testament.

Now let the adversary of truth keep silent and never again dare to utter the words referred to above!

[6.] A Further Argument against the Garatenses.] A further argument against the Garatenses is this: that every day they preach and assert that in the beginning the devil corrupted the four elements of the true Lord God, namely, heaven, earth, water, and fire. If this is true, as they believe and repeatedly preach and affirm to their believers, let the Garatenses answer the following objection which I pose against them: Was this corruption of the holy elements of the true Lord God, which was accomplished by the devil, a good and holy thing, or was it evil and most vain? If they should answer that it was good and holy, the reply then would be: If that were true, they would falsely believe and preach. For they say the devil corrupted the four elements of the true God, which would be untrue, since a good and holy act would not corrupt the holy elements which were from the good Lord God. And, pursuing this argument, it would be necessary for them to believe that the formation of male and female, from which visible bodies were produced and which they hold to have been effected in the beginning by the devil, was good and holy. This is the exact opposite of their belief, since they preach and absolutely affirm that acts of union of male and female are wicked and not in accordance with the will of God. Why, then, do they reject meat, eggs, and cheese, made from the most holy elements, if that corruption or formation which was accomplished by the devil in the beginning was good and holy? Hence, whoever may say this is admirably refuted.

But assume them to reply: That corruption or formation of the most holy elements of the true Lord God which was accomplished by the devil was evil and most vain and contrary to God's will, as they indubitably believe and affirm. The rejoinder then would be: Now let the Garatenses answer whether the corruption of the most holy elements—which was evil and vain, which was accomplished by the devil, as was admitted above—was done by the will of the Most Holy Father or entirely against His will. If they should say that the corruption of the holy elements was done by the will of the Lord, for it is incredible that the devil could corrupt the most holy elements contrary to the will of God, the rejoinder would be: Thus it follows that the Lord had an evil will when He desired evil and most vain corruption to be accomplished in His most holy elements, as just stated. And if they should say that the will of God was good and holy when He wished His holy elements to be corrupted, for by that corruption or formation was established the kingdom of the most holy Creator, namely, the kingdom of new souls, who had been created from eternity and are now daily given form through the union of man and woman, then it would follow of necessity that the union of man and woman is entirely good and holy, if thus and in no other way God seeks completely to renew His kingdom with new souls. Now this union ought not to be utterly repudiated, as the Garatenses repeatedly do, were it the true means by which new souls are given form. If, however, they should say: Indeed, we believe this corruption or formation was effected in the most holy elements contrary to the will of God, then it follows of necessity that there is another principle, one of evil, which can corrupt the four elements of the most holy Creator entirely against the latter's will. This would not be true if there were only one First Principle. Also, had the devil been a creature of the true Lord God, he could not have done any violence to the most holy elements against the latter's will. Therefore, it follows that there are two principles of things, to wit, one of good, the other of evil; and the latter is the source of the corruption of the holy elements and also the source of all evil. Therefore, the Garatenses are entangled in their own most foolish arguments.

But perhaps they would still protest by saying: The corruption of the holy elements was not accomplished by the will of the Lord nor against His will, but was done by His permission and acquiescence. But let the Garatenses answer whether this acquiescence and permission, by which the most holy elements were corrupted, was good and holy, or evil and most vain. If they should say: This acquiescence was good and holy, then it follows of necessity that the holy elements were not corrupted at all, since the most holy elements would not be corrupted by a good and holy acquiescence. And also, that formation of man and woman which, as they believe, was effected by the devil would be most good and holy; which is the direct opposite of what the Garatenses believe. If, however, they should say: It was evil and vain (as is the truth of the matter). -- then God made a most foolish and wicked concession, and thus God was the cause of this evil, as the Apostle says to the Romans: "Not only they that do them are worthy of death, but they also that consent to them." It is absolutely impossible to believe this of the true Lord God. It then follows of necessity that there is another principle, one of evil, who forced the true God to permit and suffer the wicked and most vain. corruption in His most holy elements, quite against His will. This in no wise would the true Lord God do entirely and directly of His own will.

And so, in all the ways recounted above, the Garatenses are ensnared in their own words.

Part VI. On Will

[1] On the Ignorance of Many Persons. Since many persons enveloped in the darkness of ignorance maintain that not only those who will be saved but those who never will be saved have a potency for salvation and can be saved, I have decided to demolish this absurd opinion with most valid argument. Now, let the unlearned answer the question whether a person can at any moment do that which he has not done, does not do, never will do. If they reply in the negative, [they admit that] there is no doubt of its impossibility, for that which cannot be accomplished at any time is never possible of accomplishment.

At this point I state the issue: Let us presume that there is a certain person who never did good in order to merit salvation, is not doing so, and never will do so. Therefore, in accordance with the above reply, it was impossible for him at any moment to do good in order to merit salvation; hence, the potency for salvation was never in him. Nor, if the potency for salvation was never in him, did this individual ever have a free will by which he might merit salvation. Why, then, will God judge him, as the dullards opine, if in him there never was the potency for salvation nor for doing good in order to merit salvation, as was admitted above? Hence, by this reasoning, vain will be the belief of those who declared that those persons who are to be saved as well as those who never are to be saved have a potency for salvation and can be saved, as was said above.

However, they may say: Indeed, this person could do good if he chose--although he never has done, does not now, and never will do good – but he does not wish to. This is the opinion of dullards. Now, I raise the question of will in the same way as above I raised the question of potency. For instance, there is a certain person who never had a good will by which to merit salvation; he does not now have and never will have it. Let them tell me whether this person can ever have the good will which merits salvation. If they say no, because he never had this desire and never will have it—as was said above in the matter of potency and as also is the truth of the matter—then, if he had not the good will which would merit salvation, he indubitably has not the potency to achieve salvation or to do good in order to

merit it, since without good will no one can be saved. Therefore, there was never in him the capacity for desiring to do good or for doing good in order to be saved.

In the same way I raise the question of knowledge. Suppose there is a certain person who never was wise enough to tell good from evil or truth from falsehood in order to merit salvation, one who never was and never will be wise enough (undoubtedly many such are to be encountered in this world). If the reply to my question is in the negative, as it was in the matter of potency and of will, then never can this person have the wisdom to distinguish good from evil so as to merit salvation. Therefore, he can not be saved, because without discernment no one can be saved. Therefore, as was pointed out above, this man never had within himself the capacity for salvation or to desire or know the good in order to merit salvation; and by this reasoning will be destroyed the belief of those who say that God shall judge men on their ability (arbitrium) to distinguish good from evil and that in those who never will be saved there is the potency for salvation.

But if they reply rashly, saying that indeed this person was able to do what he did not, does not now, and never will do; and was able to have this desire which he had not, has not, and never will have; that he was able to have this knowledge which he had not, has not, and never will have, my answer is this: If that were absolutely true, we might say as well that one can make a goat pope of the Church of the Romans and do all things which are impossible! That one could wish to burn in eternal fire, to suffer all evils and the worst of misfortunes, and, indeed, could have perfect knowledge of the true Lord God, knowledge as whole and perfect as God has!—This is stupid to say and absurd to believe. In truth, if that which was not, is not, and never will be can come to pass, and if it wholly and directly exists in potency, it follows without a doubt that the angels and all the saints could become demons, demons could become glorious angels; Christ could become the devil, and the devil the glorious Christ; and all impossibilities could exist and do exist in potency! This is most false to say and most absurd to believe.

Now the right of the matter is this: A person is able to do whatever he has done, does now, and will do in the future; this existed or exists in him potentially. That which he has not done, does not now do, and never will do, a person cannot do. It did not and does not exist potentially in him in any way, for we cannot properly affirm that that which never eventuates in act in any way exists in potency.

A second comment: I say that in all things which were, are, and shall be the following two things were necessary before they came into existence: the necessity of being and the impossibility of not being. This is particularly true in respect of Him who has complete knowledge from eternity of all the past, the present, and the future. For if God knows that something will be before it exists, it is impossible for it not to come into existence, because God could not know that it would come to pass were there the

possibility that it would not. For instance, if before Peter dies someone knows that he is to die today, it is necessary for him to die today, since it is impossible for him both to die and not to die today. Therefore, before his death there pre-existed the necessity of dying and the impossibility of not dying. In respect of him who knew that Peter would die today, then, it was necessary for Peter to die today and impossible for him not to die today.

Here is another argument [against free will]: God, as many believe, made His angels good and perfect. Did He, or did He not, know before they existed that they would become demons? If He did not know it, then He is imperfect, not absolutely all-knowing. In the minds of wise men this is impossible. Therefore, He indubitably knew that they would become demons before they did so, since the First Cause is intelligence, knowing perfectly that which shall come to pass in accordance with that which has the possibility of coming to pass, as Aristotle proves in the third book of Physics, where he says that to the First Cause all things are in the present.¹ Therefore, the necessity of their being demons and the impossibility of their not being demons preceded the existence of the angels. It was, then, utterly impossible for them not to be demons, and especially so in respect of God, in whom all things which were, are, and shall be, are in the present, as was said previously. How, by what audacity, can the ignorant say that the aforesaid angels could remain good and holy with their Lord for all time, since that was forever impossible in God, who knows all things before they come to pass, as Susanna says in the Book of Daniel, "O eternal God, who knowest hidden things, who knowest all things before they come to pass"? And so it naturally follows that all things, of necessity, were created in the First Cause. Therefore, those things which are created have being and can exist; and, conversely, those things which are not created have no being and cannot exist in any way. So vanishes the opinion of those who said that the angels had the power both to sin and not to sin.

[2] More on This Concept. The concept presented above cannot, I maintain, be reconciled with the theories of those who believe that there is only one First Principle, who believe that new souls or spirits are daily being created, and that the Lord must judge the good and the wicked, adults and children (magnum et parvos), entirely on the basis of their free will or choice. Let these persons answer this question: According to their belief are all peoples to be gathered together before God? If this were true, there would be an untold multitude of children of all races, four years of age or less, and an astonishing multitude of the dumb, the deaf, and the simple-minded, none of whom were ever able to do penance, none of whom had from God in any measure either the ability or the knowledge to do good. Why or how would the Lord Jesus be able to say to these: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

For I was hungry and you gave me to eat," and so on? Such a statement most certainly could not be true, since they never were in any way able to do so [of their free will], nor have they done so. But if, perchance, anyone should say that they are to be damned to eternity, I answer that this is wholly

rejected in terms of free will. How would the Lord be able to say to these: "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire. For I was hungry and you gave me not to eat," and so on? For they could reasonably excuse themselves on the very grounds of free will, saying:

We were never able in any way to do this because You never bestowed upon us the capacity for or the knowledge of how to do good. And so free will as it is conceived of by our opponents is entirely rejected.

Consider this most evil concept! There are, indeed, some who believe that children who are born and who die on the same day and whose souls have been newly created will be tortured in eternal punishment forever and ever, and that they can never escape therefrom. Indeed, how utterly astounding is their boldness in preaching that the Lord Jesus must judge all men in terms of free will, for that concept, as was shown above, is utterly untrue.

Part VII. On Persecutions

[1] On Striking' the Shepherd. "For it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be dispersed.'" "The shepherd" means Christ; "the dispersed sheep of the flock" refers to the disciples. But the true Lord God did not by His own act absolutely and directly strike His Son Jesus Christ, for if He had committed this murder by His own act exclusively and essentially no one could incriminate Pilate or the Pharisees or Judah in any way, for they would have carried out the will of God fully; on the contrary, it would have been a sin to resist the will of God. Whence the explanation is this: God "struck" His Son by enduring His death, for they were powerless to carry out the deed unless the Lord himself had permitted it. And this is what Christ said to Pilate: "Thou shouldst not have any power against me unless it were given thee from above." "Unless [permission] were given," He said—not "unless the power were given"—as though He were saying: Unless it were allowed you by God, you would have no power to do me any hurt. For it was the evil principle through whom Pilate and the Pharisees and Judah and the others committed this murder. The true Lord God endured this wicked deed, being unable in a better way to deliver His people from the power of the enemy. He says through Isaiah: "For the wickedness of my people have I struck him." For the disciples, too, have been dispersed, that is, put apart from Christ by the power of evil spirits, for a certain purpose, which was not a good one, as is subsequently recorded: "Then the disciples all leaving Him fled."

[In the manuscript, the passage just translated is followed by miscellaneous items, chiefly excerpts from the Pauline epistles, which occupy one folio. Thereafter appears the Catharist ritual in Latin -- see The Cathar Ritual -- and then the following passages on persecution.]

[2] On the Persecution of the Prophets, of Christ, of the Apostles, and of Others Who Followed Them. As I pondered when reading and rereading the Holy Scriptures, it seemed to me that many times in them were attested the evils which the prophets and Christ and the apostles once bore in all forgiveness while doing good for the salvation of their souls; and as well, how in the last days the followers of Christ must bear many scandals, tribulations, persecutions, afflictions, sorrows, even death through false Christs and false prophets, and through evil men and seducers; and how they should forgive them that persecute and calumniate them, pray for them, do good unto them, likewise seeking not to resist them. In just that way now the true Christians are seen to act, fulfilling the Holy Scriptures to their own good and honor, and indeed the ungodly and the sinners are seen to act to their own hurt, so as to fill up their sins always to the measure of their fathers.

Whence Paul says in the second Epistle to Timothy: "Know also this, that in the last days shall come dangerous times. Men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous, haughty, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, wicked, without affection, without peace, slanderers, incontinent, unmerciful, without kindness, stubborn, puffed up, and lovers of pleasures more than of God, having an appearance indeed of godliness, but denying the power thereof. Now these avoid." And Christ says in the Gospel of Matthew: "There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch as to deceive, if possible, even the elect." And to the Romans Paul says: "And as they liked not to have God in their knowledge, God delivered them up to a reprobate sense to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all iniquity, malice, fornication, avarice, wickedness; full of envy, murder, contention, deceit, malignity; whisperers, detractors, hateful to God, contumelious, proud, pleasing to themselves, haughty, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, foolish, dissolute, without affection, without fidelity, without mercy." 10 And the Blessed Peter says in his second Epistle: "But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there shall be among you lying teachers, who shall bring in sects of perdition and deny the Lord who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their riotousnesses, through whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you, whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their perdition slumbereth not." And Paul says to Timothy in the second Epistle: "But evil men and seducers shall grow worse and worse, erring and driving into error." And in the Acts of the Apostles Paul says: "Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Spirit hath placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood. For I know that after my departure ravening wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock. And of them shall arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, keeping in memory."

[3] On the Persecution of the Prophets. Moreover, one finds many references to the persecution of the prophets and of Christ and of the apostles. For Paul says to the Hebrews concerning the persecution of the prophets: "And what shall I yet say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets, who by faith conquered kingdoms, wrought justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, recovered strength from weakness, became valiant in battle, put to flight the armies of foreigners. Women received their dead raised to life again. But others were racked, not accepting deliverance, that they might find a better resurrection. And others had trial of mockeries and stripes, moreover also of bands and prisons. They were killed, they were cut asunder, they were tempted, they were put to death by the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being in want, distressed, afflicted, of whom the world was not worthy; wandering in deserts, in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth. And all these, being approved by the testimony of faith, received not the promise, God providing some better thing for us, that they should not be perfected without us." And Christ says in the Gospel of the Blessed Matthew: "For so they persecuted the prophets that were before you." And in the Acts of the Apostles, the Blessed Stephen says: "You stiffnecked and noncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you also. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them who foretold of the coming of this just Christ, of whom you have been now the betrayers and murderers who have received the Law by the disposition of angels and have not kept it."

And in the Gospel of Matthew, Christ says: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! that build the sepulchers of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the just, and say, 'If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.' Wherefore you are witnesses against yourselves, that you are the sons of them that killed the prophets. Fill ye up, then, the measure of your fathers. you serpents, generation of vipers, how will you flee from the judgment of hell? Therefore behold, I send to you prophets and wise men and scribes, and some of them you will put to death and crucify, and some you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, that upon you may come all the just blood that has been shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel the just even unto the blood of Zechariah the son of Berechiah, whom you killed between the temple and the altar. Amen, I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee! How often would I have gathered together thy children as the hen cloth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldst not! Behold, your house shall be left to you desolate. For I say to you, you shall not see me further, till you say, 'Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.'" And the Blessed James says in the Epistle: "Take, my brethren, for an example of suffering evil, of labor and patience, of forbearance, the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we account them blessed who have endured. You have heard of the patience of Job, and you have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is merciful and compassionate."

[4] On the Passion and Persecution of Christ. Moreover, the tribulation and persecution and passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, occurring after the tribulation of the prophets of which we spoke above, is manifestly displayed in Holy Scriptures. For it is found in the Gospel of the Blessed Matthew that when Christ was a child it was announced to Joseph by an angel: 'Arise, and take the child and His mother, and fly into Egypt, and be there until I shall tell thee. For it will come to pass that Herod will seek the child to destroy Him.' Who arose, and took the child and His mother and retired into Egypt, and he was there until the death of Herod." And in the Gospel of the Blessed Luke it is written of Christ: "And Joseph and His mother were wondering at those things which were spoken concerning Him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'Behold, this child is set for the fall and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted, and thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed.'" And it is written in the Gospel of the Blessed Matthew: "And Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart and said to them, 'Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death. And shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified, and the third day He shall rise again"; and again, "You know that after two days shall be the pasch, and the Son of man shall be delivered up to be crucified."

And in the Gospel of John, Christ says: "Amen, amen, I say unto you, before Abraham was made, I am.' They took up stones therefore to cast at Him; but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple" ; and again, "The chief priests, therefore, and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, 'What shall we do, for this man doth many miracles? If we let him alone so, all will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away our place and nation.' But one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that year, said to them, 'You know nothing; neither do you consider that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.' And this he spoke not of himself, but, being the high priest of that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation, and not only for the nation, but to gather together in one the children of God that were dispersed. From that day therefore they devised to put Him to death"; and again, "The world cannot hate you, but me it hateth because I give testimony of it that the works thereof are evil." And again, "These things I command you, that you love one another. If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember my word that I said to you, 'The servant is not greater than his master.' If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.'" And the Blessed John says in the Apocalypse: "And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to be delivered, that when she should be delivered, he might devour her son." And the Blessed James says: "You have feasted upon earth, and in riotousness you have nourished your hearts in the day of slaughter. You have condemned and put to death the Just One and he resisted you not." And in the Acts of the Apostles, the Blessed Peter says: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words:

Jesus of Nazareth, approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by Him, in the midst of you, as you also know; this same being delivered up, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you, by the hands of wicked men, have crucified and slain. Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the sorrows of hell, as it was impossible that He should be holden by it." And again, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know most certainly that God hath made both Lord and Christ, this same Jesus, whom you have crucified." And again: "Ye men of Israel, why wonder at this, or why look you upon us, as if by our strength or power we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified His Son Jesus, whom you indeed delivered up and denied before the face of Pilate, when he judged He should be released. But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you. But the author of life you killed, whom God hath raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. And in the faith of His name, this man, whom you have seen and known, hath His name strengthened; and the faith which is by Him, hath given soundness in the sight of you all. And now, brethren, I know that you did it through ignorance, as did also your rulers. But those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled.

Be penitent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, that when the times of refreshment shall come from the presence of the Lord, and He shall send Him who hath been preached unto you, Jesus Christ, whom heaven indeed must receive until the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets from the beginning of the world." And again, the apostles with one accord said: "Lord, thou that didst make heaven and earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, who, by the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of our father David, thy servant, hast said, 'Why did the Gentiles rage, and the people meditate vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes assembled together against the Lord and his Christ. For of a truth there assembled together in this city against Thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, to do what thy hand and thy counsel decreed to be done.'" And again, "But Peter and the apostles answering, said, 'We ought to obey God, rather than men. The God of our fathers hath raised up Jesus, whom you put to death, hanging Him upon a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand, to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. And we are witnesses of these things, and the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to all that obey Him.' When they had heard these things, they were cut to the heart and they thought to put them to death." And again, "God sent the word to the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all). You know the word which hath been published through all Judea, for it began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached: Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. And we are witnesses of all things that He did in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom the Jews rejected and killed, hanging Him upon a tree. Him God raised up the third day, and gave Him to be made manifest; not to all the people but to witnesses preordained by God, even to us, who did eat and

drink with Him after he arose again from the dead. And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead.

To Him all the prophets give testimony that by His name all receive remission of sins who believe in him." And again, "Men, brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you fear God, to you the word of this salvation is sent. For they that inhabit Jerusalem, and the rulers thereof, not knowing Him nor the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, judging Him have fulfilled them; and finding no cause of death in Him, they desired of Pilate that they might kill Him. And when they had fulfilled all things that were written of Him, taking Him down from the tree, they laid Him in a sepulcher. But God raised Him up from the dead the third day."³⁴ And the Blessed Peter says in the first Epistle: "Christ, therefore, having suffered in the flesh, be you also armed with the same thought, for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sins, that now he may live the rest of his time in the flesh, not after the desires of men but according to the will of God." And the Blessed Mark says in the Gospel: "And He taketh Peter and James and John with Him, and He began to fear and be sorrowful and be heavy. And He saith to them, 'My soul is sorrowful even unto death; stay you here and watch.'"" And again: "And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole earth until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eloi, Eloi, lama sabacthani?' which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why halt thou forsaken me?" And again, "And Jesus, having cried out with a loud voice, gave up the ghost." And the Blessed Matthew says: "Then they crucified with Him two thieves, one on the right hand and one on the left"; and again, "And Jesus, again crying with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost." And the Blessed Luke says: "And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.' And saying this, He gave up the ghost."

[5] On the Tribulation of the Saints. The subject of our Lord Jesus Christ's tribulation and passion has been quite clearly attested, as was shown most abundantly in the foregoing. Now we must speak of the tribulation and persecution and death which the apostles and their heirs had to suffer in time to come, doing good and forgiving, and how they must also endure in their own time. In just that way true Christians now are seen to act, those called heretics now, as they were in the time of Paul, as he himself says in the Acts of the Apostles: "But this I confess to thee, that according to the way which they call a heresy, so do I serve God my father"; and again, "For as concerning this sect, you know that it is everywhere contradicted." Whence our Lord Jesus Christ when describing the forthcoming persecution to His disciples says in the Gospel of the Blessed Matthew: "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when they shall revile you and persecute you and speak all that is evil against you untruly for my sake; be glad in that day and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets that were before you." And again: "Behold, I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves. Be ye, therefore, wise as serpents and simple as doves. But beware of men; for they will deliver you up in councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues, and you shall be brought before governors and before kings for my sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they shall deliver you up, take no thought how or what to speak, for

it shall be given you in that hour what to speak. For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you. The brother also shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the son, and the children shall rise up against their parents and shall put them to death; and you shall be hated by all men for my name's sake. But he that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved. And when they shall persecute you in this city, flee into another. Amen, I say to you, you shall not finish all the cities of Israel till the Son of man come. The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord; it is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the goodman of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household?"

And in the Gospel, Christ says: "Amen, amen, I say to you, that you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice; and you shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labor, hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but when she hath brought forth the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. So also you now indeed have sorrow, but I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you." And in the Gospel of the Blessed Matthew Christ says: "Take heed that no man seduce you. For many will come in my name saying, 'I am Christ,' and they will seduce many. And you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that ye be not troubled; for these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be pestilences and famines and earthquakes in places; now all these are the beginnings of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and you shall be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be scandalized, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise and shall seduce many. And because iniquity hath abounded, the charity of many shall grow cold. But he that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved." And in the Apocalypse it is said: "Behold, the devil will cast you into prison, that you may be tried, and you shall have tribulation ten days. Be thou faithful until death, and I will give thee the crown of life?" 48 And in the Gospel of John, Christ says to His disciples: "These things I command you, that you love one another. If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember my word that I said to you, 'The servant is not greater than his master.' If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for my name's sake, because they know not Him that sent me."

[6] How the Saints Have Suffered. It is made quite clear in Holy Scriptures, as we pointed out in the preceding, how our Lord Jesus Christ showed through His words that in His name His disciples would bear tribulations and persecutions and even death in days to come. But now we must describe how they in their time bore many evils and tribulations and persecutions and even death in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, just as He himself foretold to them in the Holy Scriptures. For He says in the Gospel of John: "And now I come to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy filled in themselves. I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them because they are not of the

world, as I also am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil. They are not of the world, as I also am not of the world." And the Blessed John in the first Epistle says: "Wonder not, brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren." And the Blessed Peter in the first Epistle says: "Dearly beloved, think not strange the burning heat which is to try you, as if some new thing happened to you. But if you partake of the sufferings of Christ, rejoice that when His glory shall be revealed you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you be reproached for the name of Christ, you shall be blessed, for that which is of the honor, glory, and power of God, and that which is his Spirit shall rest upon you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or a railer, or a coveter of other men's things; but if as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name. For the time is that judgment should begin at the house of God. And if first at us, what shall be the end of them that did not believe the gospel of God? And if the just man shall scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them also that suffer according to the will of God commend their souls in good deeds to the faithful Creator."

And Paul in the Acts of the Apostles says of himself, "And I, indeed, did formerly think that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which also I did at Jerusalem, and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority of the chief priests, and when they were put to death, I brought the sentence. And oftentimes punishing them, in every synagogue, compelled them to blaspheme, and being yet more mad against them, persecuted them even unto foreign cities." And the Blessed Peter in the first Epistle says: "For this is thankworthy, if for conscience toward God, a man endure sorrow, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it if committing sin and being buffeted for it, you endure? But if doing well you suffer patiently, this is thankworthy before God, for unto this are you called because Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example that you should follow His steps. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, did not revile; when He suffered, He threatened not, but delivered himself to him that judged him unjustly. Who His own self bore our sins in His body upon the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live to justice; by whose stripes you were healed. For you were as sheep going sometimes astray, but you are now converted to the shepherd and bishop of your souls." And in the Acts of the Apostles it is written: "And at that time there was raised a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem, and they were all dispersed through the countries of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles." And Paul says to the Romans: "Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or persecution, or the sword? As it is written, 'For Thy sake we are put to death all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.'

But in all these things we overcome because of Him that hath loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor virtues, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." And the Blessed Peter in the first Epistle says: "If now you must

be for a little time made sorrowful in divers temptations, that the trial of your faith, much more precious than gold which is tried by the fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the appearing of Jesus Christ." And Paul in the Acts of the Apostles says: "Men, brethren, I have conversed with all good knowledge before God until this present day." And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to strike him on the mouth." And again Paul himself says to the Corinthians in the first Epistle: "Even unto this hour we both hunger and thirst and are naked and are buffeted and have no fixed abode; and we labor, working with our own hands. We are reviled and we bless; we are persecuted and we suffer it. We are blasphemed and we entreat; we are made as the refuse of this world, the offscouring of all even until now. I write not these things to confound you, but I admonish you as my dearest children." And Blessed Peter in the first Epistle says: "And who is he that can hurt you, if you be zealous of good? But if also you suffer anything for justice' sake, blessed are ye. And be not afraid of their fear, so that you be not troubled." And Paul in the first Epistle to the Corinthians says of himself: "For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God." And Paul in the second Epistle to the Corinthians: "In all things we suffer tribulation, but are not distressed; we are straitened, but are not destitute; we suffer persecution, but are not forsaken; we are cast down, but we perish not. Always bearing about in our body the mortification of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our bodies. For we who live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake; that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh." And to the Ephesians, the same Apostle says: "Finally, brethren, be strengthened in the Lord and in the might of His power. Put you on the armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places.

Therefore take unto you the armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and to stand in all things perfect. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of justice, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in all things taking the shield of faith, wherewith you may be able to extinguish all the fiery darts of the most wicked one. And take unto you the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. By all prayer and supplication praying at all times in the spirit, and in the same watching." And in the second Epistle to the Corinthians, the same Apostle says: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we also may be able to comfort them who are in all distress, by the exhortation wherewith we also are exhorted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also by Christ doth our comfort abound.

Now whether we be in tribulation, it is for your exhortation and salvation; or whether we be exhorted, it is for your exhortation and salvation, which worketh in us in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer. That our hope for you may be steadfast, knowing that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so shall you be also of the consolation. For we would not have you ignorant, brethren, of one

tribulation, which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure above our strength, so that we were weary even of life. But we had in ourselves the answer of death, that we should not be confident in ourselves but in God who raiseth the dead. Who hath delivered and doth deliver us out of so great dangers; in whom we trust that He will yet also deliver us. You helping withal in prayer for us." 84 And to the Galatians Paul said: "For you have heard of my conversation in times past in the Jews' religion: how that, beyond measure, I persecuted the Church of God and wasted it. And I made progress in the Jews' religion above many of my equals in my own nation, being more abundantly zealous for the traditions of my fathers." And again, to the Corinthians in the second Epistle: "I speak according to dishonor, as if we had been weak in this part. Wherein if any man dare (I, speak foolishly), I dare also. They are Hebrews? So am I. They are the seed of Abraham? So am I. [They are ministers of Christ?] I speak as one less wise. I am more, in many more labors, in prisons more frequently, in stripes above measure, in deaths often. Of the Jews five times did I receive forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods; once I was stoned. Thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I was in peril of the sea; in journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils from my own nation, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils from false brethren; in labor and painfulness, in much watchings, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things, which are without, my daily instance, the solicitude for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalized, and I am not on fire?"

And in the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, Paul says: "So that we ourselves also glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith, and in all your persecutions and retributions which you endure, for an example of the just judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which also you suffer. Seeing it is a just thing with God to repay tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled, rest with us when our Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven." And in the first Epistle to Timothy, Paul says of himself. "I give Him thanks who hath strengthened me, even to Christ Jesus our Lord, for that He hath counted me faithful, putting me in the ministry who before was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and contumelious. But I obtained the mercy of God, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." And to the Thessalonians, in the first Epistle, the Apostle himself says: "You, however, are become followers of the brethren of the churches of God which are in Judaea, in Christ Jesus. For you also have suffered the same things from your own countrymen, even as they have from the Jews, who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and have persecuted us, and please not God, and are adversaries to all men, prohibiting us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, to fill up their sins always, for the wrath of God is come upon them to the end."

And again: "And we sent Timothy, our brother and the minister of God in the gospel of Christ, to confirm you and exhort you concerning your faith, that no man should be moved in these tribulations, for yourselves know, that we are appointed thereunto. For even when we were with you, we foretold you that we should suffer tribulations, as also it is come to pass and you know. For this cause also, I, forbearing no longer, sent to know your faith, lest perhaps he that tempteth should have tempted you,

and our labor should be made vain." And to the Corinthians, in the first Epistle, Paul says: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." And to the Philippians, Paul says: "And in nothing be ye terrified by the adversaries, which to them is a cause of perdition but to you of salvation, and this from God. For unto you it is given for Christ not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for Him, having the same conflict as that which you have seen in me and now have heard of me." Whence, the same Paul in that second Epistle to Timothy says: "But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, patience, persecutions, afflictions, such as came upon me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra, what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord delivered me. And all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, suffer persecution."

And now the book is finished; let us give thanks to Christ.